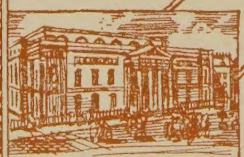
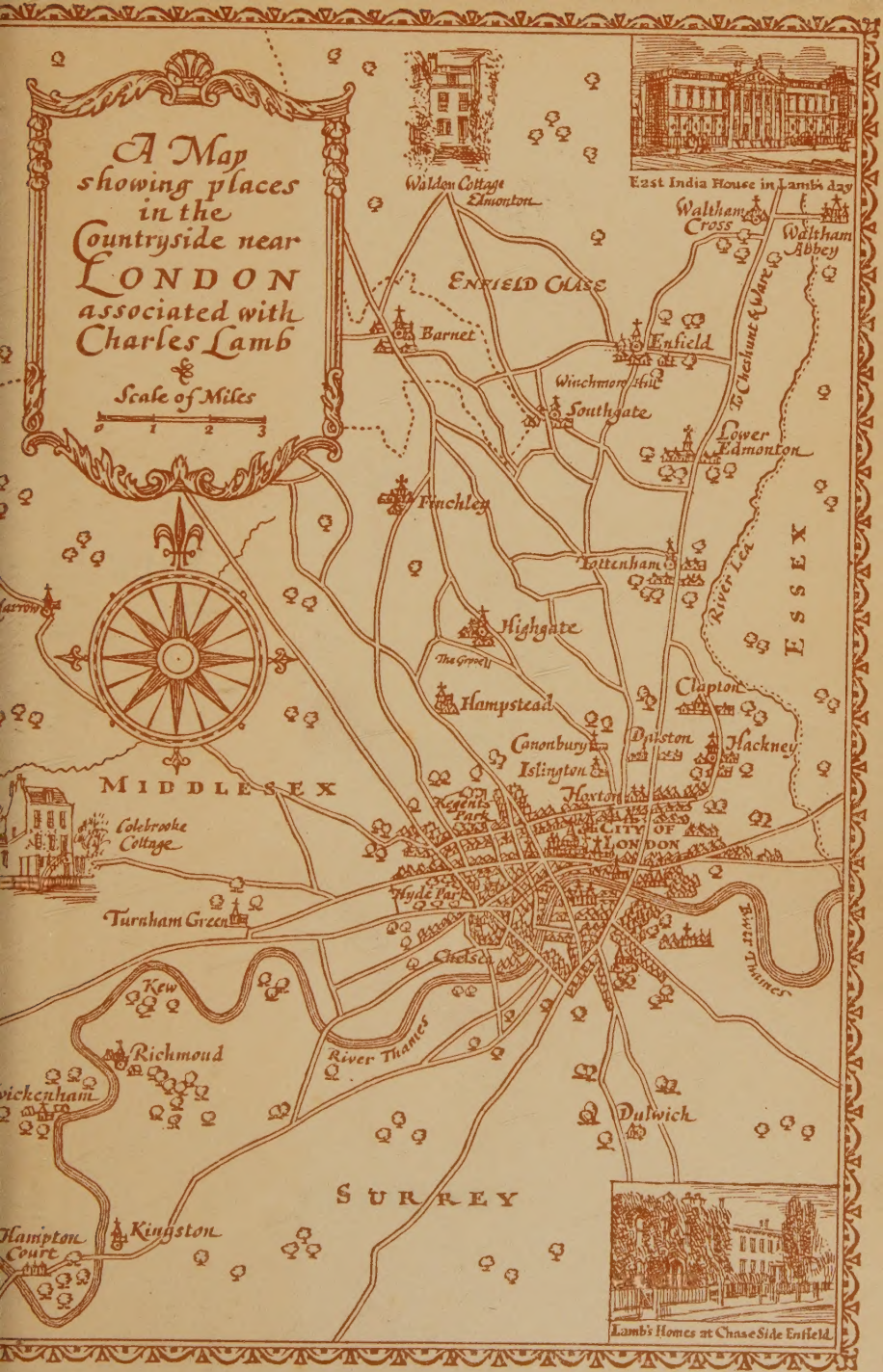
Christ's Hospital. The Writing School

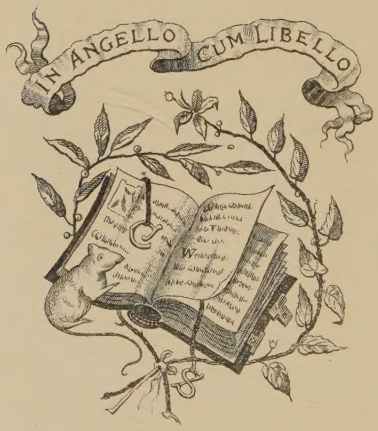
A Map showing places in LONDON associated with Charles Lamb



Covent Garden Th. in Lamb's day

A. E. TAYLOR 29


A Map showing places in the Countryside near LONDON associated with Charles Lamb
Scale of Miles
0 1 2 3
Walden Cottage Edmonton
East India House in Lamb's day
Waltham Cross
Waltham Abbey
ENFIELD CHASE
Barnet
Enfield
To Cheshunt & Ware
Winchmore Hill
Southgate
Lower Edmonton
Finchley
Tottenham
River Lea
ESSEX
Highgate
The Grove
Hampstead
Clapton
Canonbury
Islington
Dalston
Hackney
Hoxton
Regent's Park
CITY OF LONDON
MIDDLESEX
Colebrooke Cottage
Hyde Park
Turnham Green
Chelsea
Kew
Richmond
River Thames
Dulwich
SURREY
Hampton Court
Kingston
Lamb's Homes at Chase Side Enfield



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THE COLLECTED ESSAYS OF CHARLES LAMB

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME TWO

FANNY KELLY

From the Print Room,
British Museum.

MISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS & SKETCHES

By CHARLES LAMB

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY ROBERT LYND
AND NOTES BY WILLIAM MACDONALD
FULLY ILLUSTRATED WITH TWENTY-FIVE DRAWINGS
BY C. E. BROCK AND TWENTY-FOUR CONTEMPORARY
PORTRAITS IN PHOTOGRAVURE

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ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

AN APPEAL FROM THE SHADES

COURTEOUS STRANGER,—I have a thing to say; a wrong to complain of between thy fellows and mine;—but before our thoughts mingle, let me prepare thee for what I am. I have learned not to step too suddenly before the curtain. My nature to human prejudices is somewhat ghastly. By dreary hints and periphrasis, I must lead thee, like the guilty royal John, to my revelation:—

> ——If the midnight bell
> Did with his iron tongue and brazen mouth
> Sound One unto the drowsy race of night,—
> If this same were a churchyard where we stand,—

then might I with less misgiving unfold myself. Shrieks, groans, aguish fears, not more chilling to thy spirit than to mine, are the penalties of a rash disclosure. Hast thou buried thy thoughts ever with the buried, till the chamber seemed thronged with supernatural presences? Hast thou been in a dream sometimes with those that are gone to "the land of the moles and pismires?"

I am one of those. I occupy that mysterious parenthesis between the life past and to come, which in mortal language goes by the name of death. With this warning I may now venture to disclose to thee my spectral shape, blurred as it is by the Lethean fogs. Is my paleness so very terrible, or is there anything so fearful as piteous in my unreflecting eyes? Is there aught to shudder at, beside the coldness in my innocent lean hand? What have I on my cheek or lips, but the not unlovely languor of death,—an expression akin to the pleasant expression of sleep. I come with no rude foot-fall to startle thee,—but the noiseless pace that belongs to our quiet abodes. My voice is only unearthly for that it hath lost all its fretful notes and passionate harshnesses. My garment is as the lily's. Does this snow-white raiment make my visits, or not, the more angel-like,—or must I be held loathsome for want of a more wordly habiliment, and some refuse clay?

Is there any disgustful wormy circumstance about me,—or do I not come purified rather of my mortal slough?

I have no gaping unseemly wound to scare thee withal,—no horrible death-pang imprinted on my visage, but with calm Christian feature as I died, have come above only to solace some old wordly hankerings and regrets. The unforgotten earth has spells potent as those of Endor's hag, that sometimes pluck us from our graves. The summer's springing flowers, with their stirring roots, tug at the buried heart. The merry songs of birds—friendly, family voices—the chime of village bells, and melodious fall of waters, have echoes in the spiritual ear—

——True as the shell
To the old ocean's melancholy swell.

The old familiar faces and homely images have their camera in the ghostly organ, and awaken yearnings stronger than the tomb.

Not often we come earthward in enmity. Revenge and hatred, that domineer in hot bloods, are quieter passions in our torpid pulses. Not of ourselves, but at command of divine justice, we arise from our turfy pillows to dog the heels of the unconfessed murderer; seldomer still do we forsake our peaceful city, to convey unwelcome omens to the living;—there are croaking ravens enough for that office—to point out a miserly hoard of gold, we rise never! More kindly and peaceful (though all the Neroes are amongst us) are our midnight errands. There is no nerve now, in the phantom arm,—for a tyrant to drive a dagger,—or to snatch a sceptre from the weakest hand of flesh. The cruel, the unjust, and the crafty, remain therefore in the sullenest shades below; but the gentle spirit of love is soothed by haunting the old home and its hearths. These after-relishes of life—these holiday furloughs the kind Death allows us,—and they serve to sweeten some darker passages in our coffin-dreams,—

* * * * *

Thou hast ceased to shiver at me, and it eases my soul. There is but one man in the breathing world, that ought to quake at my apparition, for he knows how greedily his damnable dishonest hand filched once out of my needful portion,—and yet even he, by a moment's manhood, need scarcely tremble at my unsubstantial presence. What avail against his front my shadowy frowns,—nay what availed it, when we met once in the moonlight, that, stung by the proud look of the stately traitor, I sprang up behind him, on his tall white pacing horse,

and strove to strangle the triumphing Judas with my ineffectual arms? The pangs of that fruitless effort were all mine. My arch-enemy suffered not even an atom's discomposure; but swept on with the same scornful feature, which I wept, or felt as if I wept, not to have even subdued. Alas! a wreath of thin wood-smoke is a thing stronger than I!

If then in malice or indignation we pale vapourish spirits be thus powerless and unhurtful, why should the unguilty living start from us—the kindly familiars that come to them in all love and gentleness? It were a grateful charity methinks not to startle us—poor dream-bewildered sleepwalkers from the nether world—but with tenderness to lead us back into our churchyard beds. It were a brave stretch of human hospitality to entertain not the outcast flesh merely, but the fleshless wanderer, more naked than the naked,—from the Stygian coast forlorn. Shall there be no refuge for the uttermost destitution? —Can the houseless have a claim above the worldless?

And yet, when my boon companions of old times remember me in their cups, and dedicate the solemn draught to my memory, they would start with bristling horror from their seats, to behold me sitting in my accustomed chair.

Would they not have me sensible of the invocation?—Or is theirs but the cant of sentiment, lavished upon vacancy? We have no such cold manners even in our bleak precinct. How would it become the cold companionship, if when their angels descended amongst us, there were no better cheer for their welcome? But we have cups (such as we have) set ready for them all.

Tell them, I pray, there is something hollow in this. In the body or out of the body they must find a chirping welcome for me still.

Tell them there is some echo of the former mirth, some reflection of the old joys amongst us—though somewhat dimmer, like the sunbeam returned by the ghostlike moon. We are vital memories. The past and imperfect tenses of life make up the present being of the shades. To have lived once makes us immortal. We exist on in dreams—not inaccessible to spiritual pleasures and pains. Alas! our souls smart at our unnatural repulses upon earth. Where our hearts were,—we feel dismal achings and throes, at the death of human fellowship.

Oh, my cheerful kindhearted friends, fellow campaigners erst in the merry stirring world, tremble not so wrongfully at a frail ghost's intrusion. Shrink not so abhorringly from his fond

hand's impalpable grasp! 'tis for me to shrink, if shrinking must be, from the gross mundane clay. 'Tis for me to groan, if groaning must be, that I can bestow on you nothing more hearty than my pale kind looks. Fill up one welcome cup to the homesick exile that stealeth lovingly amongst you. Soothe the naked phantasy a dreamwhile, with his accustomed place. Let the amicable phantom dally a season with the old images,—and then, with your kind farewells and a sigh and an alas! commend him to a peaceful slumber on the Lethean shore!—

Oh my beloved babes! my Margaret! wife and children of my love,—shudder no more when my fond doting spirit haunts amongst you! why call me up so often with sighs and tears, and all the sobbing conjurations of grief and love,—from the dark abyss. Why stuff out my vacant garments with my form, —and yet tremble at my apparition, but a shade more real? My soul yearns towards you—till strong affection tears me from the tomb, but groans, sighs, and speechless ecstacies,—or shrieks more startling to me than cry of chanticleer, are obnoxious to my presence. 'Tis no dream, then, that my moans are heard on the wind!—

* * * * *

Patient stranger, farewell. I have made thee my interpreter, and would thank thee,—but I scent the forbidden morn. I may not linger to see its first, faintest, cheerful streak:

——Fare thee well at once.
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near
And 'gins to pale his ineffectual fire,—
Adieu, adieu, adieu!—remember me.

THE LONDONER

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "REFLECTOR"

Mr. Reflector,—I was born under the shadow of St. Dunstan's steeple, just where the conflux of the eastern and western inhabitants of this twofold city meet and justle in friendly opposition at Temple-Bar. The same day which gave me to the world, saw London happy in the celebration of her great annual feast. This I cannot help looking upon as a lively omen of the future great good will which I was destined to bear toward the city, resembling in kind that solicitude which every Chief Magistrate is supposed to feel for whatever concerns her

interests and well being. Indeed I consider myself in some sort a speculative Lord Mayor of London: for though circumstances unhappily preclude me from the hope of ever arriving at the dignity of a gold chain and Spital Sermon, yet thus much will I say of myself in truth, that Whittington with his Cat (just emblem of vigilance and a furred gown) never went beyond me in affection, which I bear to the citizens.

I was born, as you have heard, in a crowd. This has begot in me an entire affection for that way of life, amounting to an almost insurmountable aversion from solitude and rural scenes. This aversion was never interrupted or suspended, except for a few years in the younger part of my life, during a period in which I had set my affections upon a charming young woman. Every man while the passion is upon him, is for a time at least addicted to groves and meadows and purling streams. During this short period of my existence, I contracted just familiarity enough with rural objects to understand tolerably well ever after the *poets*, when they declaim in such passionate terms in favour of a country life.

For my own part, now the fit is past, I have no hesitation in declaring, that a mob of happy faces crowding up at the pit door of Drury-lane Theatre, just at the hour of six, gives me ten thousand sincerer pleasures, than I could ever receive from all the flocks of silly sheep that ever whitened the plains of Arcadia or Epsom Downs.

This passion for crowds is nowhere feasted so full as in London. The man must have a rare *recipe* for melancholy, who can be dull in Fleet-street. I am naturally inclined to hypochondria, but in London it vanishes, like all other ills. Often, when I have felt a weariness or distaste at home, have I rushed out into her crowded Strand, and fed my humour, till tears have wetted my cheek for inutterable sympathies with the multitudinous moving picture, which she never fails to present at all hours, like the scenes of a shifting pantomime.

The very deformities of London, which give distaste to others, from habit do not displease me. The endless succession of shops where *Fancy miscalled Folly* is supplied with perpetual guads and toys, excite in me no puritanical aversion. I gladly behold every appetite supplied with its proper food. The obliging customer, and the obliged tradesman—things which live by bowing, and things which exist but for homage—do not affect me with disgust; from habit I perceive nothing but urbanity, where other men, more refined, discover meanness:

I love the very smoke of London, because it has been the medium most familiar to my vision. I see grand principles of honour at work in the dirty ring which encompasses two combatants with fists, and principles of no less eternal justice in the detection of a pickpocket. The salutary astonishment with which an execution is surveyed, convinces me more forcibly than a hundred volumes of abstract polity, that the universal instinct of man in all ages has leaned to order and good government.

Thus an art of extracting morality from the commonest incidents of a town life, is attained by the same well-natured alchymy, with which the Foresters of Arden, in a beautiful country,

> Found tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.

Where has spleen her food but in London? Humour, Interest, Curiosity, suck at her measureless breasts without a possibility of being satiated. Nursed amid her noise, her crowds, her beloved smoke, what have I been doing all my life, if I have not lent out my heart with usury to such scenes!

I am, Sir, your faithful servant,

A Londoner.

ON THE INCONVENIENCES RESULTING FROM BEING HANGED

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "REFLECTOR"

Sir,—I am one of those unhappy persons whose misfortunes, it seems, do not entitle them to the benefit of pure pity. All that is bestowed upon me of that kindest alleviator of human miseries, comes dashed with a double portion of contempt. My griefs have nothing in them that is felt as sacred by the bystanders. Yet is my affliction in truth of the deepest grain. The heaviest task that was ever given to mortal patience to sustain. Time, that wears out all other sorrows, can never modify or soften mine. Here they must continue to gnaw, as long as that fatal mark——

Why was I ever born? Why was innocence in my person suffered to be branded with a stain which was appointed only for the blackest guilt? What had I done, or my parents, that a disgrace of mine should involve a whole posterity in infamy?

I am almost tempted to believe, that, in some pre-existent state, crimes to which this sublunary life of mine hath been as much a stranger as the babe that is newly born into it, have drawn down upon me this vengeance, so disproportionate to my actions on this globe.

My brain sickens, and my bosom labours to be delivered of the weight that presses upon it, yet my conscious pen shrinks from the avowal. But out it must——

O, Mr. Reflector! guess at the wretch's misery who now writes this to you, when, with tears and burning blushes, he is obliged to confess, that he has been——HANGED——

Methinks I hear an involuntary exclamation burst from you, as your imagination presents to you fearful images of your correspondent unknown,—*hanged*!

Fear not, Mr. Editor. No disembodied spirit has the honour of addressing you. I am flesh and blood, an unfortunate system of bones, muscles, sinews, arteries, like yourself.

Then, I presume, you mean to be pleasant—That expression of yours, Mr. Correspondent, must be taken somehow in a meta phorical sense——

In the plainest sense, without trope or figure—Yes, Mr. Editor! this neck of mine has felt the fatal noose,—these hands have tremblingly held up the corroborative prayer-book,—these lips have sucked the moisture of the last consolatory orange,—this tongue has chaunted the doleful cantata which no performer was ever called upon to repeat,—this face has had the veiling night-cap drawn over it——

But for no crime of mine—Far be it from me to arraign the justice of my country, which, though tardy, did at length recognise my innocence. It is not for me to reflect upon judge or jury, now that eleven years have elapsed since the erroneous sentence was pronounced. Men will always be fallible, and perhaps circumstances did appear at the time a little strong——

Suffice it to say, that after hanging four minutes, (as the spectators were pleased to compute it,—a man that is being strangled, I know from experience, has altogether a different measure of time from his friends who are breathing leisurely about him,—I suppose the minutes lengthen as time approaches eternity, in the same manner as the miles get longer as you travel northward)—, after hanging four minutes, according to the best calculation of the bystanders, a reprieve came, and I was cut DOWN——

Really I am ashamed of deforming your pages with these

technical phrases—if I knew how to express my meaning shorter——

But to proceed.—My first care after I had been brought to myself by the usual methods, (those methods that are so interesting to the operator and his assistants, who are pretty numerous on such occasions,—but which no patient was ever desirous of undergoing a second time for the benefit of science), my first care was to provide myself with an enormous stock or cravat to hide the place—you understand me;—my next care was to procure a residence as distant as possible from that part of the country where I had suffered. For that reason I chose the metropolis, as the place where wounded honour (I had been told) could lurk with the least danger of exciting inquiry, and stigmatised innocence had the best chance of hiding her disgrace in a crowd. I sought out a new circle of acquaintance, and my circumstances happily enabling me to pursue my fancy in that respect, I endeavoured, by mingling in all the pleasures which the town affords, to efface the memory of what I had undergone.

But alas! such is the portentous and all-pervading chain of connexion which links together the head and members of this great community, my scheme of lying perdu was defeated almost at the outset. A countryman of mine, whom a foolish law-suit had brought to town, by chance met me, and the secret was soon blazoned about.

In a short time, I found myself deserted by most of those who had been my intimate friends. Not that any guilt was supposed to attach to my character. My officious countryman, to do him justice, had been candid enough to explain my perfect innocence. But, somehow or other, there is a want of strong virtue in mankind. We have plenty of the softer instincts, but the heroic character is gone. How else can I account for it, that of all my numerous acquaintance, among whom I had the honour of ranking sundry persons of education, talents, and worth, scarcely here and there one or two could be found, who had the courage to associate with a man that had been hanged.

Those few who did not desert me altogether, were persons of strong but coarse minds; and from the absence of all delicacy in them I suffered almost as much as from the superabundance of a false species of it in the others. Those who stuck by me were the jokers, who thought themselves entitled by the fidelity which they had shown towards me to use me with what

familiarity they pleased. Many and unfeeling are the jests that I have suffered from these rude (because faithful) Achateses. As they past me in the streets, one would nod significantly to his companion and say, pointing to me, Smoke his cravat, and ask me if I had got a wen, that I was so solicitous to cover my neck. Another would inquire, What news from * * * Assizes? (which you may guess, Mr. Editor, was the scene of my shame), and whether the session was like to prove a maiden one? A third would offer to ensure me from drowning. A fourth would teaze me with inquiries how I felt when I was swinging, whether I had not had something like a blue flame dancing before my eyes? A fifth took a fancy never to call me anything but *Lazarus*. And an eminent bookseller and publisher,—who, in his zeal to present the public with new facts, had he lived in those days, I am confident, would not have scrupled waiting upon the person himself last mentioned, at the most critical period of his existence, to solicit a *few facts relative to resuscitation*,—had the modesty to offer me —— guineas per sheet, if I would write, in his Magazine, a physiological account of my feelings upon coming to myself.

But these were evils which a moderate fortitude might have enabled me to struggle with. Alas! Mr. Editor, the women,—whose good graces I had always most assiduously cultivated, from whose softer minds I had hoped a more delicate and generous sympathy than I found in the men,—the women began to shun me—this was the unkindest blow of all.

But is it to be wondered at? How couldst thou imagine, wretchedest of beings, that that tender creature Seraphina would fling her pretty arms about that neck which previous circumstances had rendered infamous? That she would put up with the refuse of the rope, the leavings of the cord? Or that any analogy could subsist between the knot which binds true lovers, and the knot which ties malefactors?

I can forgive that pert baggage Flirtilla, who, when I complimented her one day on the execution which her eyes had done, replied, that, to be sure, Mr. * * was a judge of those things. But from thy more exalted mind, Celestina, I expected a more unprejudiced decision.

The person whose true name I conceal under this appellation, of all the women that I was ever acquainted with, had the most manly turn of mind, which she had improved by reading and the best conversation. Her understanding was not more masculine than her manners and whole disposition were delicately

and truly feminine. She was the daughter of an officer who had fallen in the service of his country, leaving his widow and Celestina, an only child, with a fortune sufficient to set them above want, but not to enable them to live in splendour. I had the mother's permission to pay my addresses to the young lady, and Celestina seemed to approve of my suit.

Often and often have I poured out my overcharged soul in the presence of Celestina, complaining of the hard and unfeeling prejudices of the world, and the sweet maid has again and again declared, that no irrational prejudice should hinder her from esteeming every man according to his intrinsic worth. Often has she repeated the consolatory assurance, that she could never consider as essentially ignominious an *accident*, which was indeed to be deprecated, but which might have happened to the most innocent of mankind. Then would she set forth some illustrious example, which her reading easily furnished, of a Phocion or a Socrates unjustly condemned; of a Raleigh or a Sir Thomas More, to whom late posterity had done justice; and by soothing my fancy with some such agreeable parallel, she would make me almost to triumph in my disgrace, and convert my shame into glory.

In such entertaining and instructive conversations the time passed on, till I importunately urged the mistress of my affections to name the day for our union. To this she obligingly consented, and I thought myself the happiest of mankind. But how was I surprised one morning on the receipt of the following billet from my charmer:

Sir,

You must not impute it to levity, or to a worse failing, ingratitude, if, with anguish of heart, I feel myself compelled by irresistible arguments to recall a vow which I fear I made with too little consideration. I never can be yours. The reasons of my decision, which is final, are in my own breast, and you must everlastingly remain a stranger to them. Assure yourself that I can never cease to esteem you as I ought.

Celestina.

At the sight of this paper, I ran in frantic haste to Celestina's lodgings, where I learned, to my infinite mortification, that the mother and daughter were set off on a journey to a distant part of the country, to visit a relation, and were not expected to return in less than four months.

Stunned by this blow, which left me without the courage to solicit an explanation by letter, even if I had known where they were, (for the particular address was industriously concealed

from me), I waited with impatience the termination of the period, in the vain hope that I might be permitted to have a chance of softening the harsh decision by a personal interview with Celestina after her return. But before three months were at an end, I learned from the newspapers, that my beloved had —given her hand to another!

Heart-broken as I was, I was totally at a loss to account for the strange step which she had taken; and it was not till some years after that I learned the true reason from a female relation of hers, to whom it seems Celestina had confessed in confidence, that it was no demerit of mine that had caused her to break off the match so abruptly, nor any preference which she might feel for any other person, for she preferred me (she was pleased to say) to all mankind; but when she came to lay the matter closer to her heart, she found that she never should be able to bear the sight (I give you her very words as they were detailed to me by her relation) the sight of a man in a nightcap, who had appeared on a public platform, it would lead to such a disagreeable association of ideas! And to this punctilio I was sacrificed.

To pass over an infinite series of minor mortifications, to which this last and heaviest might well render me callous, behold me here, Mr. Editor! in the thirty-seventh year of my existence, (the twelfth, reckoning from my re-animation), cut off from all respectable connections, rejected by the fairer half of the community,—who in my case alone seem to have laid aside the characteristic pity of their sex; punished because I was once punished unjustly; suffering for no other reason than because I once had the misfortune to suffer without any cause at all. In no other country, I think, but this, could a man have been subject to such a life-long persecution, when once his innocence had been clearly established.

Had I crawled forth a rescued victim from the rack in the horrible dungeons of the Inquisition,—had I heaved myself up from a half bastinado in China, or been torn from the just-entering, ghastly impaling stake in Barbary,—had I dropt alive from the knout in Russia, or come off with a gashed neck from the half-mortal, scarce-in-time-retracted scymetar of an executioneering slave in Turkey,—I might have borne about the remnant of this frame (the mangled trophy of reprieved innocence) with credit to myself, in any of those barbarous countries. No scorn, at least, would have mingled with the pity (small as it might be) with which what was left of me would have been surveyed.

The singularity of my case has often led me to enquire into the reasons of the general levity with which the subject of hanging is treated as a topic in this country. I say as a topic: for let the very persons who speak so lightly of the thing at a distance be brought to view the real scene,—let the platform be bona fide exhibited, and the trembling culprit brought forth,—the case is changed; but as a topic of conversation, I appeal to the vulgar jokes which pass current in every street. But why mention them, when the politest authors have agreed in making use of this subject as a source of the ridiculous? Swift, and Pope, and Prior, are fond of recurring to it. Gay has built an entire drama upon this single foundation. The whole interest of the *Beggar's Opera* may be said to hang upon it. To such writers as Fielding and Smollett it is a perfect *bon bouche*. —Hear the facetious Tom Brown, in his *Comical View of London and Westminster*, describe the *Order of the Show at one of the Tyburn Executions* in his time:—"Mr. Ordinary visits his melancholy flock in Newgate by eight. Doleful procession up Holborn-Hill about eleven. Men handsome and proper that were never thought so before, which is some comfort however. Arrive at the fatal place by twelve. Burnt brandy, women, and sabbath-breaking, repented of. Some few penitential drops fall under the gallows. Sheriff's men, parson, pickpockets, criminals, all very busy. The last concluding peremptory psalm struck up. Show over by one."—In this sportive strain does this misguided wit think proper to play with a subject so serious, which yet he would hardly have done, if he had not known that there existed a predisposition in the habits of his unaccountable countrymen to consider the subject as a jest. But what shall we say to Shakspeare, who, (not to mention the solution which the *Gravedigger* in *Hamlet* gives of his fellow workman's problem), in that scene in *Measure for Measure*, where the *Clown* calls upon *Master Barnardine* to get up and be hanged, which he declines on the score of being sleepy, has actually gone out of his way to gratify this amiable propensity in his countrymen; for it is plain, from the use that was to be made of his head, and from *Abhorson's* asking, "is the axe upon the block, sirrah?" that beheading, and not hanging, was the punishment to which *Barnardine* was destined. But Shakspeare knew that the axe and block were pregnant with no ludicrous images, and therefore falsified the historic truth of his own drama (if I may so speak) rather than he would leave out such excellent matter for a jest as the suspending of a

fellow-creature in mid air has been ever esteemed to be by Englishmen.

One reason why the ludicrous never fails to intrude itself into our contemplations upon this mode of death, I suppose to be, the absurd posture into which a man is thrown who is condemned to dance, as the vulgar delight to express it, upon nothing. To see him whisking and wavering in the air,

> As the wind you know will wave a man; [1]

to behold the vacant carcase, from which the life is newly dislodged, shifting between earth and heaven, the sport of every gust; like a weathercock, serving to show from which point the wind blows; like a maukin, fit only to scare away birds; like a nest left to swing upon a bough when the bird is flown: these are uses to which we cannot without a mixture of spleen and contempt behold the human carcase reduced. We string up dogs, foxes, bats, moles, weasels. Man surely deserves a steadier death.

Another reason why the ludicrous associates more forcibly with this than with any other mode of punishment, I cannot help thinking to be, the senseless costume with which old prescription has thought fit to clothe the exit of malefactors in this country. Let a man do what he will to abstract from his imagination all idea of the whimsical, something of it will come across him when he contemplates the figure of a fellow-creature in the day-time (in however distressing a situation) in a night-cap. Whether it be that this nocturnal addition has something discordant with day-light, or that it is the dress which we are seen in at those times when we are "seen," as the Angel in Milton expresses it, "least wise,"—this I am afraid will always be the case; unless indeed, as in my instance, some strong personal feeling overpower the ludicrous altogether. To me, when I reflect upon the train of misfortunes which have pursued men through life, owing to that accursed drapery, the cap presents as purely frightful an object as the sleeveless yellow coat and devil-painted mitre of the San Benitos.—An ancestor of mine, who suffered for his loyalty in the time of the civil wars, was so sensible of the truth of what I am here advancing, that on the morning of execution no intreaties could prevail upon him to submit to the odious dishabille, as he called it, but he insisted upon wearing, and actually suffered in, the identical

[1] Hieronimo in the Spanish Tragedy.

flowing periwig which he is painted in, in the gallery belonging to my uncle's seat in ———shire.

Suffer me, Mr. Editor, before I quit the subject, to say a word or two respecting the minister of justice in this country; in plain words, I mean the hangman. It has always appeared to me that, in the mode of inflicting capital punishments with us, there is too much of the ministry of the human hand. The guillotine, as performing its functions more of itself and sparing human agency, though a cruel and disgusting exhibition, in my mind, has many ways the advantage over *our way*. In beheading, indeed, as it was formerly practised in England, and in whipping to death, as is sometimes practised now, the hand of man is no doubt sufficiently busy; but there is something less repugnant in these downright blows than in the officious barber-like ministerings of *the other*. To have a fellow with his hangman's hands fumbling about your collar, adjusting the thing as your valet would regulate your cravat, valuing himself on his menial dexterity——

I shall never forget meeting my rascal,—I mean the fellow who officiated for me,—in London last winter. I think I see him now,—in a waistcoat that had been mine,—smirking along as if he knew me——

In some parts of Germany, that fellow's office is by law declared infamous, and his posterity incapable of being ennobled. They have hereditary hangmen, or had at least, in the same manner as they had hereditary other great officers of state; and the hangmen's families of two adjoining parishes intermarried with each other, to keep the breed entire. I wish something of the same kind were established in England.

But it is time to quit a subject which teems with disagreeable images——

Permit me to subscribe myself, Mr. Editor,

Your unfortunate friend,

PENSILIS.

ON THE DANGER OF CONFOUNDING MORAL WITH PERSONAL DEFORMITY

WITH A HINT TO THOSE WHO HAVE THE FRAMING OF ADVERTISEMENTS FOR APPREHENDING OFFENDERS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "REFLECTOR"

MR. REFLECTOR,—There is no science in their pretensions to which mankind are more apt to commit grievous mistakes, than in the supposed very obvious one of physiognomy. I quarrel not with the principles of this science, as they are laid down by learned professors; much less am I disposed, with some people, to deny its existence altogether as any inlet of knowledge that can be depended upon. I believe that there is, or may be, an art to "read the mind's construction in the face." But, then, in every species of *reading*, so much depends upon the eyes of the reader; if they are blear, or apt to dazzle, or inattentive, or strained with too much attention, the optic power will infallibly bring home false reports of what it reads. How often do we say, upon a cursory glance at a stranger, what a fine open countenance he has, who, upon second inspection, proves to have the exact features of a knave. Nay, in much more intimate acquaintances, how a delusion of this kind shall continue for months, years, and then break up all at once.

Ask the married man, who has been so but for a short space of time, if those blue eyes where, during so many years of anxious courtship, truth, sweetness, serenity, seemed to be written in characters which could not be misunderstood—ask him if the characters which they now convey be exactly the same?—if for truth he does not *read* a dull virtue (the mimic of constancy) which changes not, only because it wants the judgment to make a preference?—if for sweetness, he does not *read* a stupid habit of looking pleased at everything?—if for serenity, he does not *read* animal tranquillity, the dead pool of the heart, which no breeze of passion can stir into health? Alas! what is this book of the countenance good for, which we have read so long, and thought that we understood its contents, there comes a countless list of heart-breaking errata at the end!

But these are the pitiable mistakes to which love alone is subject. I have inadvertently wandered from my purpose, which was to expose quite an opposite blunder, into which we are no less apt to fall, through hate. How ugly a person looks

upon whose reputation some awkward aspersion hangs! and how suddenly his countenance clears up with his character. I remember being persuaded of a man whom I had conceived an ill opinion of, that he had a very bad set of teeth; which, since I have had better opportunities of being acquainted with his face and facts, I find to have been the very reverse of the truth. *That crooked old woman*, I once said, speaking of an ancient gentlewoman, whose actions did not square altogether with my notions of the rule of right. The unanimous surprise of the company before whom I uttered these words, soon convinced me that I had confounded mental with bodily obliquity, and that there was nothing tortuous about the old lady but her deeds.

This humour of mankind to deny personal comeliness to those with whose moral attributes they are dissatisfied, is very strongly shown in those advertisements, which stare us in the face from the walls of every street, and, with the tempting bait which they hang forth, stimulate at once cupidity and an abstract of love of justice in the breast of every passing peruser; I mean, the advertisements offering rewards for the apprehension of absconded culprits, strayed apprentices, bankrupts who have conveyed away their effects, debtors that have run away from their bail. I observe, that in exact proportion to the indignity with which the prosecutor, who is commonly the framer of the advertisement, conceives he has been treated, the personal pretensions of the fugitive are denied, and his defects exaggerated.

A fellow, whose misdeeds have been directed against the public in general, and in whose delinquency no individual shall feel himself particularly interested, generally meets with fair usage. A coiner or a smuggler shall get off tolerably well. His beauty, if he has any, is not much underrated, his deformities are not much magnified. A runaway apprentice, who excites perhaps the next least degree of spleen in his prosecutor, generally escapes with a pair of bandy legs; if he has taken anything with him in his flight, a hitch in his gait is generally superadded. A bankrupt, who has been guilty of withdrawing his effects, if his case be not very atrocious, commonly meets with mild usage. But a debtor who has left his bail in jeopardy, is sure to be described in characters of unmingled deformity. Here the personal feelings of the bail, which may be allowed to be somewhat poignant, are admitted to interfere; and, as wrath and revenge commonly strike in the dark, the colours are laid on with a grossness which I am convinced must often defeat its own purpose. The fish that casts an inky cloud about

him that his enemies may not find him, cannot more obscure himself by that device than the blackening representations of these angry advertisers must inevitably serve to cloak and screen the persons of those who have injured them from detection. I have before me at this moment one of these bills, which runs thus:

"*Fifty pounds reward.*

"Run away from his bail John Tomkins, formerly resident in Princes-street, Soho, but lately of Clerkenwell. Whoever shall apprehend, or cause to be apprehended and lodged in one of his Majesty's jails, the said John Tomkins, shall receive the above reward. He is a thickset, sturdy man, about five foot six inches high, halts in his left leg, with a stoop in his gait, with coarse red hair, nose short and cocked up, with little grey eyes, one of them bears the effect of a blow which he has lately received, with a pot belly, speaks with a thick and disagreeable voice, goes shabbily drest, had on when he went away, a greasy shag great coat with rusty yellow buttons."

Now, although it is not out of the compass of possibility that John Tomkins aforesaid may comprehend in his agreeable person all the above-mentioned aggregate of charms; yet, from my observation of the manner in which these advertisements are usually drawn up, though I have not the pleasure of knowing the gentleman, yet would I lay a wager, that an advertisement to the following effect would have a much better chance of apprehending and laying by the heels this John Tomkins than the above description, although penned by one who, from the good services which he appears to have done for him, has not improbably been blessed with some years of previous intercourse with the said John. Taking, then, the above advertisement to be true, or nearly so, down to the words "left leg" inclusive (though I have some doubt if the blemish there implied amount to a positive lameness, or be perceivable by any but the nearest friends of John) I would proceed thus:

—"Leans a little forward in his walk, his hair thick and inclining to auburn, his nose of the middle size, a little turned up at the end, lively hazel eyes (the contusion, as its effects are probably gone off by this time, I judge better omitted); inclines to be corpulent, his voice thick but pleasing, especially when he sings, had on a decent shag great coat with yellow buttons."

Now, I would stake a considerable wager (though by no means

a positive man) that some such mitigated description would lead the beagles of the law into a much surer track for finding this ungracious varlet, than to set them upon a false scent after fictitious ugliness and fictitious shabbiness; though, to do those gentlemen justice, I have no doubt their experience has taught them in all such cases to abate a great deal of the deformity which they are instructed to expect; and has discovered to them, that the Devil's agents upon this earth, like their master, are far less ugly in reality than they are painted.

I am afraid, Mr. Reflector, that I shall be thought to have gone wide of my subject, which was to detect the practical errors of physiognomy, properly so called; whereas I have introduced physical defects, such as lameness, the effects of accidents upon a man's person, his wearing apparel, etc., as circumstances on which the eye of dislike, looking ascance, may report erroneous conclusions to the understanding. But if we are liable, through a kind, or an unkind passion, to mistake so grossly concerning things so exterior and palpable, how much more are we likely to err respecting those nicer and less perceptible hints of character in a face, whose detection constitutes the triumph of the physiognomist.

To revert to those bestowers of unmerited deformity, the framers of advertisements for the apprehension of delinquents, a sincere desire of promoting the end of public justice induces me to address a word to them on the best means of attaining those ends. I will endeavour to lay down a few practical, or rather negative, rules for their use, for my ambition extends no further than to arm them with cautions against the self-defeating of their own purposes:

1. Imprimis, then, Mr. Advertiser! if the culprit whom you are willing to recover be one to whom in times past you have shown kindness, and been disposed to think kindly of him yourself, but he has deceived your trust, and has run away, and left you with a load of debt to answer for him,—sit down calmly, and endeavour to behold him through the spectacles of memory rather than of present conceit. Image to yourself, before you pen a tittle of his description, the same plausible, good-looking man who took you in; and try to put away from your mind every intrusion of that deceitful spectre which perpetually obtrudes itself in the room of your former friend's known visage. It will do you more credit to have been deceived by such a one; and depend upon it, the traitor will convey to the eyes of the world in general much more of that first idea

which you formed (perhaps in part erroneous) of his physiognomy, than of that frightful substitute which you have suffered to creep in upon your mind and usurp upon it; a creature which has no archetype except in your own brain.

2. If you be a master that have to advertise a runaway apprentice, though the young dog's faults are known only to you, and no doubt his conduct has been aggravating enough, do not presently set him down as having crooked ancles. He may have a good pair of legs, and run away notwithstanding. Indeed, the latter does rather seem to imply the former.

3. If the unhappy person against whom your laudable vengeance is directed be a thief, think that a thief may have a good nose, good eyes, good ears. It is indispensable to his profession that he be possessed of sagacity, foresight, vigilance; it is more than probable, then, that he is endued with the bodily types or instruments of these qualities to some tolerable degree of perfectness.

4. If petty larceny be his offence, I exhort you, do not confound meanness of crime with diminutiveness of stature. These things have no connexion. I have known a tall man stoop to the basest action, a short man aspire to the height of crime, a fair man be guilty of the foulest actions, etc.

5. Perhaps the offender has been guilty of some atrocious and aggravated murder. Here is the most difficult case of all. It is above all requisite that such a daring violator of the peace and safety of society should meet with his reward, a violent and ignominious death. But how shall we get at him? Who is there among us, that has known him before he committed the offence, that shall take upon him to say he can sit down coolly and pen a dispassionate description of a murderer? The tales of our nursery, — the reading of our youth,—the ill-looking man that was hired by the Uncle to despatch the Children in the Wood,—the grim ruffians who smothered the babes in the Tower,—the black and beetle-browed assassin of Mrs. Ratcliffe, —the shag-haired villain of Mr. Monk Lewis,—the Tarquin tread, and mill-stone dropping eyes, of Murder in Shakspeare,—the exaggerations of picture and of poetry,—what we have read and what we have dreamed of,—rise up and crowd in upon us such eye-scaring portraits of the man of blood, that our pen is absolutely forestalled; we commence poets when we should play the part of strictest historians, and the very blackness of horror which the deed calls up, serves as a cloud to screen the doer. The fiction is blameless, it is accordant with those wise

prejudices with which Nature has guarded our innocence, as with impassable barriers, against the commission of such appalling crimes; but meantime, the criminal escapes; or if,—owing to that wise abatement in their expectation of deformity, which, as I hinted at before, the officers of pursuit never fail to make, and no doubt in cases of this sort they make a more than ordinary allowance,—if, owing to this or any accident, the offender is caught and brought to his trial, who that has been led out of curiosity to witness such a scene, has not with astonishment reflected on the difference between a real committer of a murder, and the idea of one which he has been collecting and heightening all his life out of books, dreams, etc. The fellow, perhaps, is a sleek, smug-looking man, with light hair and eyebrows,—the latter by no means jutting out or like a crag,—and with none of those marks which our fancy had pre-bestowed upon him.

I find I am getting unawares too serious; the best way on such occasions is, to leave off, which I shall do by generally recommending to all prosecuting advertisers not to confound crimes with ugliness; or rather, to distinguish between that physiognomical deformity, which I am willing to grant always accompanies crime, and mere *physical ugliness*,—which signifies nothing, is the exponent of nothing, and may exist in a good or bad person indifferently.

CRITO.

ON THE AMBIGUITIES ARISING FROM PROPER NAMES

MR. REFLECTOR,—How oddly it happens that the same sound shall suggest to the minds of two persons hearing it ideas the most opposite! I was conversing a few years since with a young friend upon the subject of poetry, and particularly that species of it which is known by the name of the Epithalamium. I ventured to assert, that the most perfect specimen of it in our language was the "Epithalamium" of Spenser upon his own marriage.

My young gentleman, who has a smattering of taste, and would not willingly be thought ignorant of anything remotely connected with the *belles lettres*, expressed a degree of surprise, mixed with mortification, that he should never have heard of this poem, Spenser being an author with whose writings he thought himself peculiarly conversant.

I offered to show him the poem in the fine folio copy of the poet's works, which I have at home. He seemed pleased with the offer, though the mention of the folio seemed again to puzzle him. But, presently after, assuming a grave look, he compassionately muttered to himself, "Poor Spencer."

There was something in the tone with which he spoke these words that struck me not a little. It was more like the accent with which a man bemoans some recent calamity that has happened to a friend, than that tone of sober grief with which we lament the sorrows of a person, however excellent, and however grievous his afflictions may have been, who has been dead more than two centuries. I had the curiosity to inquire into the reasons of so uncommon an ejaculation. My young gentleman, with a more solemn tone of pathos than before, repeated, "Poor Spencer," and added, "he has lost his wife."

My astonishment at this assertion rose to such a height, that I began to think the brain of my young friend must have cracked, or some unaccountable reverie had gotten possession of it. But upon further explanation it appeared, that the word "Spenser,"—which to you or me, Reader, in a conversation upon poetry too, would naturally have called up the idea of an old poet in a ruff, one Edmund Spenser, that flourished in the days of Queen Elizabeth, and wrote a poem called the *Fairy Queen*, with the *Shepherd's Calendar*, and many more verses besides,—did in the mind of my young friend excite a very different and quite modern idea, namely, that of the Honourable William Spencer, one of the living ornaments, if I am not misinformed, of this present poetical era, A.D. 1811.

X.Y.Z.

ON BURIAL SOCIETIES

AND THE CHARACTER OF AN UNDERTAKER

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "REFLECTOR"

MR. REFLECTOR,—I was amused the other day with having the following notice thrust into my hand by a man who gives out bills at the corner of Fleet-market. Whether he saw any prognostics about me, that made him judge such notice seasonable, I cannot say; I might perhaps carry in a countenance (naturally not very florid) traces of a fever which had not long

left me. Those fellows have a good instinctive way of guessing at the sort of people that are likeliest to pay attention to their papers.

"BURIAL SOCIETY

"A favourable opportunity now offers to any person, of either sex, who would wish to be buried in a genteel manner, by paying one shilling entrance, and two-pence per week for the benefit of the stock. Members to be free in six months. The money to be paid at Mr. Middleton's, at the sign of the *First* and the *Last*, Stonecutter's-street, Fleet-market. The deceased to be furnished as follows:—A strong elm coffin, covered with superfine black, and finished with two rows, all round, close drove, best japanned nails, and adorned with ornamental drops, a handsome plate of inscription, Angel above, and Flower beneath, and four pair of handsome handles, with wrought gripes; the coffin to be well pitched, lined, and ruffled with fine crape; a handsome crape shroud, cap, and pillow. For use, a handsome velvet pall, three gentlemen's cloaks, three crape hat-bands, three hoods and scarfs, and six pair of gloves; two porters equipped to attend the funeral, a man to attend the same with band and gloves; also, the burial fees paid, if not exceeding one guinea."

"Man," says Sir Thomas Browne, "is a noble animal, splendid in ashes, and pompous in the grave." Whoever drew up this little advertisement certainly understood this appetite in the species, and has made abundant provision for it. It really almost induces a *tædium vitæ* upon one to read it. Methinks I could be willing to die, in death to be so attended. The two rows all round close-drove best black japanned nails,—how feelingly do they invite, and almost irresistibly persuade us to come and be fastened down! What aching head can resist the temptation to repose, which the crape shroud, the cap, and the pillow present; what sting is there in death, which the handles with wrought gripes are not calculated to pluck away? what victory in the grave, which the drops and the velvet pall do not render at least extremely disputable; but above all, the pretty emblematic plate, with the Angel above and the Flower beneath, takes me mightily.

The notice goes on to inform us, that though the society has been established but a very few years, upwards of eleven hundred persons have put down their names. It is really an affecting consideration to think of so many poor people, of the industrious

and hard working class (for none but such would be possessed of such a generous forethought) clubbing their twopences to save the reproach of a parish funeral. Many a poor fellow, I dare swear, has that Angel and Flower kept from the *Angel* and *Punchbowl*, while, to provide himself a bier, he has curtailed himself of *beer*. Many a savoury morsel has the living body been deprived of, that the lifeless one might be served up in a richer state to the worms. And sure, if the body could understand the actions of the soul, and entertain generous notions of things, it would thank its provident partner, that she had been more solicitous to defend it from dishonours at its dissolution, than careful to pamper it with good things in the time of its union. If Cæsar were chiefly anxious at his death how he might die most decently, every Burial Society may be considered as a Club of Cæsars.

Nothing tends to keep up, in the imaginations of the poorer sort of people, a generous horror of the workhouse more than the manner in which pauper funerals are conducted in this metropolis. The coffin nothing but a few naked planks, coarsely put together,—the want of a pall (that decent and well-imagined veil, which, hiding the coffin that hides the body, keeps that which would shock us at two removes from us), the coloured coats of the men that are hired, at cheap rates, to carry the body,—altogether, give the notion of the deceased having been some person of an ill-life and conversation, some one who may not claim the entire rites of Christian burial,—one by whom some parts of the sacred ceremony would be desecrated if they should be bestowed upon him. I meet these meagre processions sometimes in the street. They are sure to make me out of humour and melancholy all the day after. They have a harsh and ominous aspect.

If there is anything in the prospectus issued from Mr. Middleton's, Stonecutter's-street, which pleases me less than the rest, it is to find that the six pair of gloves are to be returned, that they are only lent, or, as the bill expresses it, for use, on the occasion. The hood, scarfs, and hatbands, may properly enough be given up after the solemnity: the cloaks no gentlemen would think of keeping; but a pair of gloves, once fitted on, ought not in courtesy to be re-demanded. The wearer should certainly have the fee-simple of them. The cost would be but trifling, and they would be a proper memorial of the day. This part of the Proposal wants reconsidering. It is not conceived in the same liberal way of thinking as the rest. I am also a

little doubtful whether the limit, within which the burial fee is made payable, should not be extended to thirty shillings.

Some provision too ought undoubtedly to be made in favour of those well-intentioned persons and well-wishers to the fund, who, having all along paid their subscriptions regularly, are so unfortunate as to die before the six months, which would entitle them to their freedom, are quite completed. One can hardly imagine a more distressing case than that of a poor fellow lingering on in a consumption till the period of his freedom is almost in sight, and then finding himself going with a velocity which makes it doubtful whether he shall be entitled to his funeral honours: his quota to which he nevertheless squeezes out, to the diminution of the comforts which sickness demands. I think, in such cases, some of the contribution money ought to revert. With some such modifications, which might easily be introduced, I see nothing in these Proposals of Mr. Middleton which is not strictly fair and genteel; and heartily recommend them to all persons of moderate incomes, in either sex, who are willing that this perishable part of them should quit the scene of its mortal activities, with as handsome circumstances as possible.

Before I quit the subject, I must guard my readers against a scandal, which they may be apt to take at the place whence these Proposals purport to be issued. From the sign of the *First* and the *Last*, they may conclude that Mr. Middleton is some publican, who, in assembling a club of this description at his house, may have a sinister end of his own, altogether foreign to the solemn purpose for which the club is pretended to be instituted. I must set them right by informing them that the issuer of these Proposals is no publican, though he hangs out a sign, but an honest superintendant of funerals, who, by the device of a Cradle and a Coffin, connecting both ends of human existence together, has most ingeniously contrived to insinuate, that the framers of these *first* and *last* receptacles of mankind divide this our life betwixt them, and that all that passes from the midwife to the undertaker may, in strict propriety, *go for nothing*: an awful and instructive lesson to human vanity.

Looking over some papers lately that fell into my hands by chance, and appear to have been written about the beginning of the last century, I stumbled, among the rest, upon the following short Essay, which the writer calls, "The Character of an Undertaker." It is written with some stiffness and peculiarities of style, but some parts of it, I think, not unaptly

characterise the profession to which Mr. Middleton has the honour to belong. The writer doubtless had in his mind the entertaining character of *Sable*, in Steele's excellent comedy of the *Funeral*.

CHARACTER OF AN UNDERTAKER

"He is master of the ceremonies at burials and mourning assemblies, grand marshal at funeral processions, the only true yeoman of the body, over which he exercises a dictatorial authority from the moment that the breath has taken leave to that of its final commitment to the earth. His ministry begins where the physician's, the lawyer's, and the divine's, end. Or if some part of the functions of the latter run parallel with his, it is only *in ordine ad spiritualia*. His temporalities remain unquestioned. He is arbitrator of all questions of honour which may concern the defunct; and upon slight inspection will pronounce how long he may remain in this upper world with credit to himself, and when it will be prudent for his reputation that he should retire. His determination in these points is peremptory and without appeal. Yet, with a modesty peculiar to his profession, he meddles not out of his own sphere. With the good or bad actions of the deceased in his lifetime he has nothing to do. He leaves the friends of the dead man to form their own conjectures as to the place to which the departed spirit is gone. His care is only about the exuviæ. He concerns not himself even about the body, as it is a structure of parts internal, and a wonderful microcosm. He leaves such curious speculations to the anatomy professor. Or, if anything, he is averse to such wanton inquiries, as delighting rather that the parts which he has care of should be returned to their kindred dust in as handsome and unmutilated condition as possible; that the grave should have its full and unimpaired tribute,—a complete and just carcass. Nor is he only careful to provide for the body's entireness, but for its accommodation and ornament. He orders the fashion of its clothes, and designs the symmetry of its dwelling. Its vanity has an innocent survival in him. He is bed-maker to the dead. The pillows which he lays never rumple. The day of interment is the theatre in which he displays the mysteries of his art. It is hard, to describe what he is, or rather to tell what he is not, on that day: for, being neither kinsman, servant, nor friend, he is all in turns; a transcendant, running through all those relations. His office

is to supply the place of self-agency in the family, who are presumed incapable of it through grief. He is eyes, and ears, and hands, to the whole household. A draught of wine cannot go round to the mourners, but he must minister it. A chair may hardly be restored to its place by a less solemn hand than his. He takes upon himself all functions, and is a sort of ephemeral major-domo! He distributes his attentions among the company assembled according to the degree of affliction, which he calculates from the degree of kin to the deceased; and marshals them accordingly in the procession. He himself is of a sad and tristful countenance; yet such as (if well examined) is not without some show of patience and resignation at bottom: prefiguring, as it were, to the friends of the deceased, what their grief shall be when the hand of Time shall have softened and taken down the bitterness of their first anguish; so handsomely can he fore-shape and anticipate the work of Time. Lastly, with his wand, as with another divining rod, he calculates the depth of earth at which the bones of the dead man may rest, which he ordinarily contrives may be at such a distance from the surface of this earth, as may frustrate the profane attempts of such as would violate his repose, yet sufficiently on this side the centre to give his friends hopes of an easy and practicable resurrection. And here we leave him, casting in dust to dust, which is the last friendly office that he *undertakes* to do."

Begging your pardon for detaining you so long among "graves, and worms, and epitaphs,"

I am, Sir,
Your humble servant,
MORITURUS.

EDAX ON APPETITE

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "REFLECTOR"

MR. REFLECTOR,—I am going to lay before you a case of the most iniquitous persecution that ever poor devil suffered.

You must know, then, that I have been visited with a calamity ever since my birth. How shall I mention it without offending delicacy? Yet out it must. My sufferings, then, have all arisen from a most inordinate appetite——

Not for wealth, not for vast possessions,—then might I

have hoped to find a cure in some of those precepts of philosophers or poets,—those verba et voces which Horace speaks of:

> quibus hunc lenire dolorem
> Possis, et magnam morbi deponere partem;

not for glory, not for fame, not for applause,—for against this disease, too, he tells us there are certain piacula, or, as Pope has chosen to render it,

> rhymes, which fresh and fresh applied,
> Will cure the arrant'st puppy of his pride;

nor yet for pleasure, properly so called: the strict and virtuous lessons which I received in early life from the best of parents,—a pious clergyman of the Church of England, now no more,—I trust have rendered me sufficiently secure on that side:——

No, Sir, for none of these things; but an appetite, in its coarsest and least metaphorical sense,—an appetite for *food*.

The exorbitances of my arrow-root and pappish days I cannot go back far enough to remember, only I have been told, that my mother's constitution not admitting of my being nursed at home, the woman who had the care of me for that purpose used to make most extravagant demands for my pretended excesses in that kind; which my parents, rather than believe anything unpleasant of me, chose to impute to the known covetousness and mercenary disposition of that sort of people. This blindness continued on their part after I was sent for home, up to the period when it was thought proper, on account of my advanced age, that I should mix with other boys more unreservedly than I had hitherto done. I was accordingly sent to boarding-school.

Here the melancholy truth became too apparent to be disguised. The prying republic of which a great school consists, soon found me out: there was no shifting the blame any longer upon other people's shoulders,—no good-natured maid to take upon herself the enormities of which I stood accused in the article of bread and butter, besides the crying sin of stolen ends of puddings, and cold pies strangely missing. The truth was but too manifest in my looks,—in the evident signs of inanition which I exhibited after the fullest meals, in spite of the double allowance which my master was privately instructed by my kind parents to give me. The sense of the ridiculous, which is but too much alive in grown persons, is tenfold more active and alert in boys. Once detected, I was the constant butt of their arrows,—the mark against which every puny leveller directed

his little shaft of scorn. The very Graduses and Thesauruses were raked for phrases to pelt me with by the tiny pedants. Ventri natus,—Ventri diditus,—Vesana gula,—Escarum gurges,—Dapibus indulgens,—Non dans frœna gulæ,—Sectans lautæ fercula mensæ, resounded wheresoever I past. I led a weary life, suffering the penalties of guilt for that which was no crime, but only following the blameless dictates of nature. The remembrance of those childish reproaches haunts me yet oftentimes in my dreams. My school-days come again, and the horror I used to feel, when in some silent corner retired from the notice of my unfeeling playfellows, I have sat to mumble the solitary slice of gingerbread allotted me by the bounty of considerate friends, and have ached at heart because I could not spare a portion of it, as I saw other boys do, to some favourite boy;—for if I know my own heart, I was never selfish,—never possessed a luxury which I did not hasten to communicate to others; but my food, alas! was none; it was an indispensable necessary; I could as soon have spared the blood in my veins, as have parted that with my companions.

Well, no one stage of suffering lasts for ever: we should grow reconciled to it at length, I suppose, if it did. The miseries of my school-days had their end; I was once more restored to the paternal dwelling. The affectionate solicitude of my parents was directed to the good-natured purpose of concealing even from myself the infirmity which haunted me. I was continually told that I was growing, and the appetite I displayed was humanely represented as being nothing more than a symptom and an effect of that. I used even to be complimented upon it. But this temporary fiction could not endure above a year or two. I ceased to grow, but alas! I did not cease my demands for alimentary sustenance.

Those times are long since past, and with them have ceased to exist the fond concealment,—the indulgent blindness,—the delicate overlooking,—the compassionate fiction. I and my infirmity are left exposed and bare to the broad, unwinking eye of the world, which nothing can elude. My meals are scanned, my mouthfuls weighed in a balance: that which appetite demands, is set down to the account of gluttony,—a sin which my whole soul abhors, nay, which Nature herself has put it out of my power to commit. I am constitutionally disenabled from that vice; for how can he be guilty of excess, who never can get enough? Let them cease, then, to watch my plate; and leave off their ungracious comparisons of it to

the seven baskets of fragments, and the supernaturally-replenished cup of old Baucis; and be thankful that their more phlegmatic stomachs, not their virtue, have saved them from the like reproaches. I do not see that any of them desist from eating till the holy rage of hunger, as some one calls it, is supplied. Alas! I am doomed to stop short of that continence.

What am I to do? I am by disposition inclined to conviviality and the social meal. I am no gourmand: I require no dainties: I should despise the board of Heliogabalus, except for its long sitting. Those vivacious, long-continued meals of the latter Romans, indeed I justly envy; but the kind of fare which the Curii and Dentati put up with, I could be content with. Dentatus I have been called, among other unsavoury jests. Double-meal is another name which my acquaintance have palmed upon me, for an innocent piece of policy which I put in practice for some time without being found out; which was,—going the round of my friends, beginning with the most primitive feeders among them, who take their dinner about one o'clock, and so successively dropping in upon the next and the next, till by the time I got among my more fashionable intimates, whose hour was six or seven, I have nearly made up the body of a just and complete meal (as I reckon it), without taking more than one dinner (as they account of dinners) at one person's house. Since I have been found out,I endeavour to make up by a damper, as I call it, at home, before I go out. But alas! with me, increase of appetite truly grows by what it feeds on. What is peculiarly offensive to me at those dinner-parties is, the senseless custom of cheese, and the dessert afterwards. I have a rational antipathy to the former; and for fruit, and those other vain vegetable substitutes for meat, (meat, the only legitimate aliment for human creatures since the flood, as I take it to be deduced from that permission, or ordinance rather, given to Noah and his descendants), I hold them in perfect contempt. Hay for horses. I remember a pretty apologue, which Mandeville tells very much to this purpose in his Fable of the Bees:—He brings in a Lion arguing with a Merchant, who had ventured to expostulate with this king of beasts upon his violent methods of feeding. The Lion thus retorts:—"Savage I am; but no creature can be called cruel but what either by malice or insensibility extinguishes his natural pity. The Lion was born without compassion; we follow the instinct of our nature; the gods have appointed us to live upon the waste and spoil of other animals, and as long as we can meet with

dead ones, we never hunt after the living; 'tis only man, mischievous man, that can make death a sport. Nature taught your stomach to crave nothing but vegetables.—(Under favour of the Lion, if he meant to assert this universally of mankind, it is not true. However, what he says presently is very sensible.) —Your violent fondness to change, and greater eagerness after novelties, have prompted you to the destruction of animals without justice or necessity. The Lion has a ferment within him, that consumes the toughest skin and hardest bones, as well as the flesh of all animals without exception. Your squeamish stomach, in which the digestive heat is weak and inconsiderable, won't so much as admit of the most tender parts of them, unless above half the concoction has been performed by artificial fire beforehand; and yet what animal have you spared, to satisfy the caprices of a languid appetite? Languid I say; for what is man's hunger if compared with the Lion's? Yours, when it is at the worst, makes you faint; mine makes me mad: oft have I tried with roots and herbs to allay the violence of it, but in vain; nothing but large quantities of flesh can any ways appease it."—Allowing for the Lion not having a prophetic instinct to take in every lusus naturæ that was possible of the human appetite, he was, generally speaking, in the right; and the Merchant was so impressed with his argument that, we are told, he replied not, but fainted away. O, Mr. Reflector, that I were not obliged to add, that the creature who thus argues was but a type of me! Miserable man! *I am that Lion.* "Oft have I tried with roots and herbs to allay that violence, but in vain; nothing but——"

Those tales which are renewed as often as the editors of papers want to fill up a space in their unfeeling columns, of great eaters,—people that devour whole geese and legs of mutton *for wagers*, are sometimes attempted to be drawn to a parallel with my case. This wilful confounding of motives and circumstances, which make all the difference of moral or immoral in actions, just suits the sort of talent which some of my acquaintance pride themselves upon. *Wagers!*—I thank heaven, I was never mercenary, nor could consent to prostitute a gift (though but a left-handed one) of nature, to the enlarging of my worldly substance; prudent as the necessities, which that fatal gift has involved me in, might have made such a prostitution to appear in the eyes of an indelicate world.

Rather let me say, that to the satisfaction of that talent which was given me, I have been content to sacrifice no common

expectations; for such I had from an old lady, a near relation of our family, in whose good graces I had the fortune to stand, till one fatal evening——. You have seen, Mr. Reflector, if you have ever passed your time much in country towns, the kind of suppers which elderly ladies in those places have lying in petto in an adjoining parlour, next to that where they are entertaining their periodically-invited coevals with cards and muffins. The cloth is usually spread some half-hour before the final rubber is decided, whence they adjourn to sup upon what may emphatically be called *nothing*. A sliver of ham, purposely contrived to be transparent to show the china-dish through it, neighbouring a slip of invisible brawn, which abuts upon something they call a tartlet, as that is bravely supported by an atom of marmalade, flanked in its turn by a grain of potted beef, with a power of such dishlings, *minims of hospitality*, spread in defiance of human nature, or rather with an utter ignorance of what it demands. Being engaged at one of these card-parties, I was obliged to go a little before *supper-time* (as they facetiously called the point of time in which they are taking these shadowy refections), and the old lady, with a sort of fear shining through the smile of courteous hospitality that beamed in her countenance, begged me to step into the next room and take something before I went out in the cold,—a proposal which lay not in my nature to deny. Indignant at the airy prospect I saw before me, I set to, and in a trice dispatched the whole meal intended for eleven persons,—fish, flesh, fowl, pastry,—to the sprigs of garnishing parsley, and the last fearful custard that quaked upon the board. I need not describe the consternation, when in due time the dowagers adjourned from their cards. Where was the supper?—and the servants' answer, Mr. —— had eat it all.—That freak, however, jested me out of a good three hundred pounds a year, which I afterwards was informed for a certainty the old lady meant to leave me. I mention it not in illustration of the unhappy faculty which I am possessed of; for any unlucky wag of a school-boy, with a tolerable appetite, could have done as much without feeling any hurt after it,—only that you may judge whether I am a man likely to set my talent to sale, or to require the pitiful stimulus of a wager.

I have read in Pliny, or in some author of that stamp, of a reptile in Africa, whose venom is of that hot, destructive quality, that wheresoever it fastens its tooth, the whole substance of the animal that has been bitten in a few seconds is reduced

to dust, crumbles away, and absolutely disappears: it is called from this quality, the Annihilator. Why am I forced to seek, in all the most prodigious and portentous facts of Natural History, for creatures typical of myself. *I am that snake, that Annihilator:* "wherever I fasten, in a few seconds——."

O happy sick men, that are groaning under the want of that very thing, the excess of which is my torment! O fortunate, too fortunate, if you knew your happiness, invalids! What would I not give to exchange this fierce concoctive and digestive heat,—this rabid fury which vexes me, which tears and torments me,—for your quiet, mortified, hermit-like, subdued, and sanctified stomachs,—your cool, chastened inclinations, and coy desires for food!

To what unhappy figuration of the parts intestine I owe this unnatural craving, I must leave to the anatomists and the physicians to determine: they, like the rest of the world, have doubtless their eye upon me; and as I have been cut up alive by the sarcasms of my friends, so I shudder when I contemplate the probability that this animal frame, when its restless appetites shall have ceased their importunity, may be cut up also (horrible suggestion!) to determine in what system of solids or fluids this original sin of my constitution lay lurking. What work will they make with their acids and alkalines, their serums and coagulums, effervescences, viscous matter, bile, chyle, and acrimonious juices, to explain that cause which Nature, who willed the effect to punish me for my sins, may no less have determined to keep in the dark from them, to punish them for their presumption.

You may ask, Mr. Reflector, to what purpose is my appeal to you; what can you do for me? Alas! I know too well that my case is out of the reach of advice,—out of the reach of consolation. But it is some relief to the wounded heart to impart its tale of misery; and some of my acquaintance, who may read my case in your pages under a borrowed name, may be induced to give it a more humane consideration than I could ever yet obtain from them under my own. Make them, if possible, to *reflect*, that an original peculiarity of constitution is no crime; that not that which goes into the mouth desecrates a man, but that which comes out of it,—such as sarcasm, bitter jests, mocks and taunts, and ill-natured observations; and let them consider, if there be such things (which we have all heard of) as Pious Treachery, Innocent Adultery, etc.,

whether there may not be also such a thing as Innocent Gluttony.

I shall only subscribe myself,
Your afflicted servant,
EDAX.

HOSPITA ON THE IMMODERATE INDULGENCE OF THE PLEASURES OF THE PALATE

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "REFLECTOR"

MR. REFLECTOR,—My husband and I are fond of company, and being in easy circumstances, we are seldom without a party to dinner two or three days in a week. The utmost cordiality has hitherto prevailed at our meetings; but there is a young gentleman, a near relation of my husband's, that has lately come among us, whose preposterous behaviour bids fair, if not timely checked, to disturb our tranquillity. He is too great a favourite with my husband in other respects, for me to remonstrate with him in any other than this distant way. A letter printed in your publication may catch his eye; for he is a great reader, and makes a point of seeing all the new things that come out. Indeed, he is by no means deficient in understanding. My husband says that he has a good deal of wit; but for my part I cannot say I am any judge of that, having seldom observed him open his mouth except for purposes very foreign to conversation. In short, Sir, this young gentleman's failing is, an immoderate indulgence of his palate. The first time he dined with us, he thought it necessary to extenuate the length of time he kept the dinner on the table, by declaring that he had taken a very long walk in the morning, and came in fasting; but as that excuse could not serve above once or twice at most, he has latterly dropped the mask altogether, and chosen to appear in his own proper colours without reserve or apology.

You cannot imagine how unpleasant his conduct has become. His way of staring at the dishes as they are brought in, has absolutely something immodest in it: it is like the stare of an impudent man of fashion at a fine woman, when she first comes into a room. I am positively in pain for the dishes, and cannot help thinking they have consciousness, and will be put out of countenance, he treats them so like what they are not.

Then again he makes no scruple of keeping a joint of meat

on the table, after the cheese and fruit are brought in, till he has what he calls *done with it*. Now how awkward this looks, where there are ladies, you may judge, Mr. Reflector,—how it disturbs the order and comfort of a meal. And yet I always make a point of helping him first, contrary to all good manners, —before any of my female friends are helped,—that he may avoid this very error. I wish he would eat before he comes out.

What makes his proceedings more particularly offensive at our house is, that my husband, though out of common politeness he is obliged to set dishes of animal food before his visitors, yet himself and his whole family (myself included) feed entirely on vegetables. We have a theory, that animal food is neither wholesome nor natural to man; and even vegetables we refuse to eat until they have undergone the operation of fire, in consideration of those numberless little living creatures which the glass helps us to detect in every fibre of the plant or root before it be dressed. On the same theory we boil our water, which is our only drink, before we suffer it to come to table. Our children are perfect little Pythagoreans: it would do you good to see them in their nursery, stuffing their dried fruits, figs, raisins, and *milk*, which is the only approach to animal food which is allowed. They have no notion how the substance of a creature that ever had life can become food for another creature. A beef-steak is an absurdity to them; a mutton-chop, a solecism in terms; a cutlet, a word absolutely without any meaning; a butcher is nonsense, except so far as it is taken for a man who delights in blood, or a hero. In this happy state of innocence we have kept their minds, not allowing them to go into the kitchen, or to hear of any preparations for the dressing of animal food, or even to know that such things are practised. But as a state of ignorance is incompatible with a certain age; and as my eldest girl, who is ten years old next Midsummer, must shortly be introduced into the world and sit at table with us, where she will see some things which will shock all her received notions, I have been endeavouring by little and little to break her mind, and prepare it for the disagreeable impressions which must be forced upon it. The first hint I gave her upon the subject, I could see her recoil from it with the same horror with which we listen to a tale of Anthropophagism; but she has gradually grown more reconciled to it in some measure, from my telling her that it was the custom of the world,—to which, however senseless, we must submit so far as we could do it with innocence, not to give offence; and she has shown so much

strength of mind on other occasions, which I have no doubt is owing to the calmness and serenity superinduced by her diet, that I am in good hopes, when the proper season for her *debut* arrives, she may be brought to endure the sight of a roasted chicken or a dish of sweetbreads, for the first time, without fainting. Such being the nature of our little household, you may guess what inroads into the economy of it,—what revolutions and turnings of things upside down, the example of such a feeder as Mr. —— is calculated to produce.

I wonder at a time like the present, when the scarcity of every kind of food is so painfully acknowledged, that *shame* has no effect upon him. Can he have read Mr. Malthus's Thoughts on the Ratio of Food to Population? Can he think it reasonable that one man should consume the sustenance of many?

The young gentleman has an agreeable air and person, such as are not unlikely to recommend him on the score of matrimony. But his fortune is not over large; and what prudent young woman would think of embarking hers with a man who would bring three or four mouths (or what is equivalent to them) into a family? She might as reasonably choose a widower in the same circumstances with three or four children.

I cannot think who he takes after. His father and mother, by all accounts, were very moderate eaters; only I have heard that the latter swallowed her victuals very fast, and the former had a tedious custom of sitting long at his meals. Perhaps he takes after both.

I wish you would turn this in your thoughts, Mr. Reflector, and give us your ideas on the subject of excessive eating, and, particularly, of animal food.

HOSPITA.

THE GOOD CLERK, A CHARACTER:

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF "THE COMPLETE ENGLISH TRADESMAN"

THE GOOD CLERK.—He writeth a fair and swift hand, and is competently versed in the Four First Rules of Arithmetic, in the Rule of Three (which is sometimes called the Golden Rule) and in Practice. We mention these things, that we may leave no room for cavillers to say, that anything essential hath been omitted in our definition; else, to speak the truth, these are but ordinary accomplishments, and such as every under-strapper

at a desk is commonly furnished with. The character we treat of soareth higher.

He is clean and neat in his person; not from a vainglorious desire of setting himself forth to advantage in the eyes of the other sex (with which vanity too many of our young sparks now-a-days are infected) but to do credit (as we say) to the office. For this reason he evermore taketh care that his desk or his books receive no soil; the which things he is commonly as solicitous to have fair and unblemished, as the owner of a fine horse is to have him appear in good keep.

He riseth early in the morning; not because early rising conduceth to health (though he doth not altogether despise that consideration) but chiefly to the intent that he may be first at the desk. There is his post, there he delighteth to be, unless when his meals, or necessity, calleth him away; which time he alway esteemeth as lost, and maketh as short as possible.

He is temperate in eating and drinking, that he may preserve a clear head and steady hand for his master's service. He is also partly induced to this observation of the rules of temperance by his respect for religion and the laws of his country; which things (it may once for all be noted) do add special assistances to his actions, but do not and cannot furnish the main spring or motive thereto. His first ambition (as appeareth all along) is to be a good Clerk; his next a good Christian, a good Patriot, etc.

Correspondent to this, he keepeth himself honest, not for fear of the laws, but because he hath observed how unseemly an article it maketh in the Day Book or Ledger, when a sum is set down lost or missing; it being his pride to make these books to agree, and to tally, the one side with the other, with a sort of architectural symmetry and correspondence.

He marrieth, or marrieth not, as best suiteth with his employer's views. Some merchants do the rather desire to have married men in their Counting Houses, because they think the married state a pledge for their servants' integrity, and an incitement to them to be industrious; and it was an observation of a late Lord Mayor of London, that the sons of Clerks do generally prove Clerks themselves, and that Merchants encouraging persons in their employ to marry, and to have families, was the best method of securing a breed of sober, industrious young men attached to the mercantile interest. Be this as it may, such a character as we have been describing, will wait till the pleasure of his employer is known on this point; and

regulateth his desires by the custom of the house or firm to which he belongeth.

He avoideth profane oaths and jesting, as so much time lost from his employ; what spare time he hath for conversation, which in a Counting House such as we have been supposing can be but small, he spendeth in putting seasonable questions to such of his fellows (and sometimes *respectfully* to the master himself) who can give him information respecting the price and quality of goods, the state of exchange, or the latest improvements in book-keeping; thus making the motion of his lips, as well as of his fingers, subservient to his master's interest. Not that he refuseth a brisk saying, or a cheerful sally of wit, when it comes unforced, is free of offence, and hath a convenient brevity. For this reason, he hath commonly some such phrase as this in his mouth:

It's a slovenly look
To blot your book.

Or,

Red ink for ornament, black for use,
The best of things are open to abuse.

So upon the eve of any great holyday, of which he keepeth one or two at least every year, he will merrily say, in the hearing of a confidential friend, but to none other,—

All work and no play
Makes Jack a dull boy.

Or,

A bow always bent must crack at last.

But then this must always be understood to be spoken confidentially, and, as we say, *under the rose.*

Lastly, his dress is plain, without singularity; with no other ornament than the quill, which is the badge of his function, stuck under the dexter ear, and this rather for convenience of having it at hand, when he hath been called away from his desk, and expecteth to resume his seat there again shortly, than from any delight which he taketh in foppery or ostentation. The colour of his clothes is generally noted to be black rather than brown, brown rather than blue or green. His whole deportment is staid, modest, and civil. His motto is Regularity.——

This Character was sketched, in an interval of business, to divert some of the melancholy hours of a Counting House. It is so little a creature of fancy, that it is scarce anything more than a recollection of some of those frugal and economical maxims

which, about the beginning of the last century, (England's meanest period) were endeavoured to be inculcated and instilled into the breasts of the London Apprentices,[1] by a class of instructors who might not inaptly be termed *The Masters of Mean Morals*. The astonishing narrowness and illiberality of the lessons contained in some of those books is inconceivable by those whose studies have not led them that way, and would almost induce one to subscribe to the hard censure which Drayton has passed upon the mercantile spirit:

> *The gripple merchant, born to be the curse*
> *Of this brave Isle.*

I have now lying before me that curious book by Daniel Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesman*. The pompous detail, the studied analysis of every little mean art, every sneaking address, every trick and subterfuge (short of larceny) that is necessary to the tradesman's occupation, with the hundreds of anecdotes, dialogues (in Defoe's liveliest manner) interspersed, all tending to the same amiable purpose, namely, the sacrificing of every honest emotion of the soul to what he calls the main chance,—if you read it in an *ironical sense*, and as a piece of *covered satire*, —make it one of the most amusing books which Defoe ever writ, as much so as any of his best novels. It is difficult to say what his intention was in writing it. It is almost impossible to suppose him in earnest. Yet such is the bent of the book to narrow and to degrade the heart, that if such maxims were as catching and infectious as those of a licentious cast, which happily is not the case, had I been living at that time, I certainly should have recommended to the Grand Jury of Middlesex, who presented the Fable of the Bees, to have presented this book of Defoe's in preference, as of a far more vile and debasing tendency. I will give one specimen of his advice to the young tradesman on the *Government of his Temper*. "The retail tradesman in especial, and even every tradesman in his station, must furnish himself with a competent stock of patience; I mean that sort of patience which is needful to bear with all sorts of impertinence, and the most provoking curiosity that it is impossible to imagine the buyers, even the worst of them, are or can be guilty of. *A tradesman behind his counter must have no flesh and blood about him, no passions, no resentment;* he must never be angry, no not so much as seem to be so, if a customer

[1] This term designated a larger class of young men than that to which it is now confined; it took in the articled Clerks of Merchants and Bankers, the George Barnwells of the day.

tumbles him five hundred pounds worth of goods, and scarce bids money for anything; nay, though they really come to his shop with no intent to buy, as many do, only to see what is to be sold, and though he knows they cannot be better pleased, than they are, at some other shop where they intend to buy, 'tis all one, the tradesman must take it, he must place it to the account of his calling, that *'tis his business to be ill used, and resent nothing*; and so must answer as obligingly to those that give him an hour or two's trouble and buy nothing, as he does to those who in half the time lay out ten or twenty pounds. The case is plain, and if some do give him trouble and do not buy, others make amends and do buy; and as for the trouble, 'tis the business of the shop." Here follows a most admirable story of a mercer who, by his indefatigable meanness and more than Socratic patience under affronts, overcame and reconciled a lady, who upon the report of another lady that he had behaved saucily to some third lady, had determined to shun his shop, but by the over-persuasions of a fourth lady was induced to go to it; which she does, declaring before hand that she will buy nothing, but give him all the trouble she can. Her attack and his defence, her insolence and his persevering patience, are described in colours worthy of a Mandeville; but it is too long to recite. "The short inference from this long discourse" (says he) "is this, that here you see, and I could give you many examples like this, how and in what manner a shop-keeper is to behave himself in the way of his business; what impertinences, what taunts, flouts, and ridiculous things, he must bear in his trade, and must not show the least return, or the least signal of disgust: he must have no passions, no fire in his temper; he must be all soft and smooth; nay, if his real temper be naturally fiery and hot, he must show none of it in his shop; he must be a perfect *complete hypocrite* if he will be a *complete tradesman*.[1] It is true, natural tempers are not to be always counterfeited; the man cannot easily be a lamb in his shop, and a lion in himself; but let it be easy or hard, it must be done, and is done: there are men who have by custom and usage brought themselves to it, that nothing could be meeker and milder than they, when behind the counter, and yet nothing be more furious and raging in every other part of life; nay the provocations they have met with in their shops have so irritated their rage, that they would go up stairs from their shop, and fall into frenzies, and a kind

[1] As no qualification accompanies this maxim, it must be understood as the genuine sentiment of the author!

of madness, and beat their heads against the wall, and perhaps mischief themselves, if not prevented, till the violence of it had gotten vent, and the passions abate and cool. I heard once of a shop-keeper that behaved himself thus to such an extreme, that when he was provoked by the impertinence of the customers, beyond what his temper could bear, he would go up stairs and beat his wife, kick his children about like dogs, and be as furious for two or three minutes as a man chained down in Bedlam; and again, when that heat was over, would sit down, and cry faster than the children he had abused; and after the fit, he would go down into the shop again, and be as humble, courteous, and as calm as any man whatever; so absolute a government of his passions had he in the shop and so little out of it; in the shop, a soul-less animal that would resent nothing; and in the family a madman: in the shop, meek like a lamb; but in the family, outrageous, like a Libyan lion. The sum of the matter is, it is necessary for a tradesman to subject himself by all the ways possible, to his business; *his customers are to be his idols: so far as he may worship idols by allowance, he is to bow down to them, and worship them*; at least, he is not in any way to displease them, or show any disgust or distaste, whatsoever they may say or do; the bottom of all is, that he is intending to get money by them, and it is not for him that gets money to offer the least inconvenience to them by whom he gets it; he is to consider that, as Solomon says, the borrower is servant to the lender, so the seller is servant to the buyer."—What he says on the head of *Pleasures and Recreations* is not less amusing: —"The tradesman's pleasure should be in his business; his companions should be his books, (he means his Ledger, Waste-book, etc.) and if he has a family, he makes *his excursions up stairs and no further*:—none of my cautions aim at restraining a tradesman from diverting himself, as we call it, with his fire-side, or keeping company with his wife and children."—Liberal allowance; nay, almost licentious and criminal indulgence!—but it is time to dismiss this *Philosopher of Meanness*. More of this stuff would illiberalise the pages of the *Reflector*. Was the man in earnest, when he could bring such powers of description, and all the charms of natural eloquence, in commendation of the meanest, vilest, wretchedest degradations of the human character?—Or did he not rather laugh in his sleeve at the doctrines which he inculcated, and retorting upon the grave citizens of London their own arts, palm upon them a sample of disguised Satire under the name of wholesome Instruction?

RECOLLECTIONS OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL

To comfort the desponding parent with the thought that, without diminishing the stock which is imperiously demanded to furnish the more pressing and homely wants of our nature, he has disposed of one or more perhaps out of a numerous offspring, under the shelter of a care scarce less tender than the paternal, where not only their bodily cravings shall be supplied, but that mental *pabulum* is also dispensed, which He hath declared to be no less necessary to our sustenance, who said, that "not by bread alone man can live": for this Christ's Hospital unfolds her bounty. Here neither, on the one hand, are the youth lifted up above their family, which we must suppose liberal though reduced; nor, on the other hand, are they liable to be depressed below its level by the mean habits and sentiments which a common charity-school generates. It is, in a word, an Institution to keep those who have yet held up their heads in the world from sinking; to keep alive the spirit of a decent household, when poverty was in danger of crushing it; to assist those who are the most willing, but not always the most able, to assist themselves; to separate a child from his family for a season, in order to render him back hereafter, with feelings and habits more congenial to it, than he could even have attained by remaining at home in the bosom of it. It is a preserving and renovating principle, an antidote for the *res angusta domi*, when it presses, as it always does, most heavily upon the most ingenuous natures.

This is Christ's Hospital; and whether its character would be improved by confining its advantages to the very lowest of the people, let those judge who have witnessed the looks, the gestures, the behaviour, the manner of their play with one another, their deportment towards strangers, the whole aspect and physiognomy of that vast assemblage of boys on the London foundation, who freshen and make alive again with their sports the else mouldering cloisters of the old Grey Friars—which strangers who have never witnessed, if they pass through Newgate-street, or by Smithfield, would do well to go a little out of their way to see.

For the Christ's Hospital boy feels that he is no charity-boy; he feels it in the antiquity and regality of the foundation to which he belongs; in the usage which he meets with at school, and the treatment he is accustomed to out of its bounds; in the

respect, and even kindness, which his well known garb never fails to procure him in the streets of the metropolis; he feels it in his education, in that measure of classical attainments, which every individual at that school, though not destined to a learned profession, has it in his power to procure, attainments which it would be worse than folly to put it in the reach of the labouring classes to acquire: he feels it in the numberless comforts, and even magnificences, which surround him; in his old and awful cloisters, with their traditions; in his spacious school-rooms, and in the well-ordered, airy, and lofty rooms where he sleeps; in his stately dining-hall, hung round with pictures, by Verrio, Lely, and others, one of them surpassing in size and grandeur almost any other in the kingdom;[1] above all, in the very extent and magnitude of the body to which he belongs, and the consequent spirit, the intelligence, and public conscience, which is the result of so many various yet wonderfully combining members. Compared with this last-named advantage, what is the stock of information, (I do not here speak of book-learning, but of that knowledge which boy receives from boy,) the mass of collected opinions, the intelligence in common, among the few and narrow members of an ordinary boarding-school?

The Christ's Hospital or Blue-coat boy, has a distinctive character of his own, as far removed from the abject qualities of a common charity-boy as it is from the disgusting forwardness of a lad brought up at some other of the public schools. There is *pride* in it, accumulated from the circumstances which I have described as differencing him from the former; and there is *a restraining modesty*, from a sense of obligation and dependence, which must ever keep his deportment from assimilating to that of the latter. His very garb, as it is antique and venerable, feeds his self-respect; as it is a badge of dependence, it restrains the natural petulance of that age from breaking out into overt-acts of insolence. This produces silence and a reserve before strangers, yet not that cowardly shyness which boys mewed up at home will feel; he will speak up when spoken to, but the stranger must begin the conversation with him. Within his bounds he is all fire and play; but in the streets he steals along with all the self-concentration of a young monk. He is never known to mix with other boys, they are a sort of laity to him. All this proceeds, I have no doubt, from the

[1] By Verrio, representing James the Second on his throne, surrounded by his courtiers, (all curious portraits,) receiving the mathematical pupils at their annual presentation, a custom still kept up on New-year's-day at Court.

WITH ALL THE SELF-CONCENTRATION OF A YOUNG MONK

continual consciousness which he carries about him of the difference of his dress from that of the rest of the world; with a modest jealousy over himself, lest, by over-hastily mixing with common and secular playfellows, he should commit the dignity of his cloth. Nor let any one laugh at this; for, considering the propensity of the multitude, and especially of the small multitude, to ridicule anything unusual in dress—above all, where such peculiarity may be construed by malice into a mark of disparagement—this reserve will appear to be nothing more than a wise instinct in the Blue-coat boy. That it is neither pride nor rusticity, at least that it has none of the offensive qualities of either, a stranger may soon satisfy himself by putting a question to any of these boys: he may be sure of an answer couched in terms of plain civility, neither loquacious nor embarrassed. Let him put the same question to a parish boy, or to one of the trencher-caps in the —— cloisters, and the impudent reply of the one shall not fail to exasperate any more than the certain servility, and mercenary eye to reward, which he will meet with in the other, can fail to depress and sadden him.

The Christ's Hospital boy is a religious character. His school is eminently a religious foundation, it has its peculiar prayers, its services at set times, its graces, hymns, and anthems, following each other in an almost monastic closeness of succession. This religious character in him is not always untinged with superstition. That is not wonderful, when we consider the thousand tales and traditions which must circulate, with undisturbed credulity, amongst so many boys, that have so few checks to their belief from any intercourse with the world at large; upon whom their equals in age must work so much, their elders so little. With this leaning towards an overbelief in matters of religion, which will soon correct itself when he comes out into society, may be classed a turn for romance above most other boys. This is to be traced in the same manner to their excess of society with each other, and defect of mingling with the world. Hence the peculiar avidity with which such books as the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, and others of a still wilder cast, are, or at least were in my time, sought for by the boys. I remember when some half-dozen of them set off from school, without map, card, or compass, on a serious expedition to find out *Philip Quarll's Island.*

The Christ's Hospital boy's sense of right and wrong is peculiarly tender and apprehensive. It is even apt to run out into ceremonial observances, and to impose a yoke upon itself

beyond the strict obligations of the moral law. Those who were contemporaries with me at that School thirty years ago, will remember with what more than Judaic rigour the eating of the fat of certain boiled meats [1] was interdicted. A boy would have blushed, as at the exposure of some heinous immorality, to have been detected eating that forbidden portion of his allowance of animal food, the whole of which, while he was in health, was little more than sufficient to allay his hunger. The same, or even greater, refinement was shewn in the rejection of certain kinds of sweet-cake. What gave rise to these supererogatory penances, these self-denying ordinances, I could never learn;[2] they certainly argue no defect of the conscientious principle. A little excess in that article is not undesirable in youth, to make allowance for the inevitable waste which comes in maturer years. But in the less ambiguous line of duty, in those directions of the moral feelings which cannot be mistaken or depreciated, I will relate what took place in the year 1785, when Mr. Parry, the steward, died. I must be pardoned for taking my instances from my own times. Indeed, the vividness of my recollections, while I am upon this subject, almost bring back those times; they are present to me still. But I believe that in the years which have elapsed since the period which I speak of, the character of the Christ's Hospital boy is very little changed. Their situation in point of many comforts is improved; but that which I ventured before to term the *public conscience* of the school, the pervading moral sense, of which every mind partakes, and to which so many individual minds contribute, remains, I believe, pretty much the same as when I left it. I have seen within this twelvemonth almost the change which has been produced upon a boy of eight or nine years of age, upon being admitted into that school; how, from a pert young coxcomb, who thought that all knowledge was comprehended within his shallow brains, because a smattering of two or three languages and one or two sciences were stuffed into him by injudicious treatment at home, by a mixture with the wholesome society of so many schoolfellows, in less time than I have spoken of, he has sunk to his own level, and is

[1] Under the denomination of *gags*.

[2] I am told that the late steward [Mr. Hathaway] who evinced on many occasions a most praiseworthy anxiety to promote the comfort of the boys, had occasion for all his address and perseverance to eradicate the first of these unfortunate prejudices, in which he at length happily succeeded, and thereby restored to one-half of the animal nutrition of the school those honours which painful superstition and blind zeal had so long conspired to withhold from it.

contented to be carried on in the quiet orbit of modest self-knowledge in which the common mass of that unpresumptuous assemblage of boys seem to move: from being a little unfeeling mortal, he has got to feel and reflect. Nor would it be a difficult matter to show how, at a school like this, where the boy is neither entirely separated from home, nor yet exclusively under its influence, the best feelings, the filial for instance, are brought to a maturity which they could not have attained under a completely domestic education; how the relation of a parent is rendered less tender by unremitted association, and the very awfulness of age is best apprehended by some sojourning amidst the comparative levity of youth; how absence, not drawn out by too great extension into alienation or forgetfulness, puts an edge upon the relish of occasional intercourse, and the boy is made the better *child* by that which keeps the force of that relation from being felt as perpetually pressing on him; how the substituted paternity, into the care of which he is adopted, while in everything substantial it makes up for the natural, in the necessary omission of individual fondnesses and partialities, directs the mind only the more strongly to appreciate that natural and first tie, in which such weaknesses are the bond of strength, and the appetite which craves after them betrays no perverse palate. But these speculations rather belong to the question of the comparative advantages of a public over a private education in general. I must get back to my favourite school; and to that which took place when our old and good steward died.

And I will say, that when I think of the frequent instances which I have met with in children, of a hard-heartedness, a callousness, and insensibility to the loss of relations, even of those who have begot and nourished them, I cannot but consider it as a proof of something in the peculiar conformation of that school, favourable to the expansion of the best feelings of our nature, that, at the period which I am noticing, out of five hundred boys there was not a dry eye to be found among them, nor a heart that did not beat with genuine emotion. Every impulse to play, until the funeral day was past, seemed suspended throughout the school; and the boys, lately so mirthful and sprightly, were seen pacing their cloisters alone, or in sad groupes standing about, few of them without some token, such as their slender means could provide, a black ribband, or something to denote respect and a sense of their loss. The time itself was a time of anarchy, a time in which all authority (out

of school-hours) was abandoned. The ordinary restraints were for those days superseded; and the gates, which at other times kept us in, were left without watchers. Yet, with the exception of one or two graceless boys at most, who took advantage of that suspension of authorities to *skulk out*, as it was called, the whole body of that great school kept rigorously within their bounds, by a voluntary self-imprisonment; and they who broke bounds, though they escaped punishment from any master, fell into a general disrepute among us, and, for that which at any other time would have been applauded and admired as a mark of spirit, were consigned to infamy and reprobation; so much *natural government* have gratitude and the principles of reverence and love, and so much did a respect to their dead friend prevail with these Christ's Hospital boys, above any fear which his presence among them when living could ever produce. And if the impressions which were made on my mind so long ago are to be trusted, very richly did their steward deserve this tribute. It is a pleasure to me even now to call to mind his portly form, the regal awe which he always contrived to inspire, in spite of a tenderness and even weakness of nature that would have enfeebled the reins of discipline in any other master; a yearning of tenderness towards those under his protection, which could make five hundred boys at once feel towards him each as to their individual father. He had faults, with which we had nothing to do; but, with all his faults, indeed, Mr. Perry was a most extraordinary creature. Contemporary with him, and still living, though he has long since resigned his occupation, will it be impertinent to mention the name of our excellent upper grammar-master, the Rev. James Boyer? He was a disciplinarian, indeed, of a different stamp from him whom I have just described; but, now the terrors of the rod, and of a temper a little too hasty to leave the more nervous of us quite at our ease to do justice to his merits in those days, are long since over, ungrateful were we if we should refuse our testimony to that unwearied assiduity with which he attended to the particular improvement of each of us. Had we been the offspring of the first gentry in the land, he could not have been instigated by the strongest views of recompense and reward to have made himself a greater slave to the most laborious of all occupations than he did for us sons of charity, from whom, or from our parents, he could expect nothing. He has had his reward in the satisfaction of having discharged his duty, in the pleasurable consciousness of having advanced the respectability

of that institution to which, both man and boy, he was attached; in the honours to which so many of his pupils have successfully aspired at both our Universities; and in the staff with which the Governors of the Hospital at the close of his hard labours, with the highest expressions of the obligations the school lay under to him unanimously voted to present him.

I have often considered it among the felicities of the constitution of this school, that the offices of steward and schoolmaster are kept distinct; the strict business of education alone devolving upon the latter, while the former has the charge of all things out of school, the controul of the provisions, the regulation of meals, of dress, of play, and the ordinary intercourse of the boys. By this division of management, a superior respectability must attach to the teacher while his office is unmixed with any of these lower concerns. A still greater advantage over the construction of common boarding-schools is to be found in the settled salaries of the masters, rendering them totally free of obligation to any individual pupil or his parents. This never fails to have its effect at schools where each boy can reckon up to a hair what profit the master derives from him, where he views him every day in the light of a caterer, a provider for the family, who is to get so much by him in each of his meals. Boys will see and consider these things; and how much must the sacred character of preceptor suffer in their minds by these degrading associations! The very bill which the pupil carries home with him at Christmas, eked out, perhaps, with elaborate though necessary minuteness, instructs him that his teachers have other ends than the mere love to learning in the lessons which they give him; and though they put into his hands the fine sayings of Seneca or Epictetus, yet they themselves are none of those disinterested pedagogues to teach philosophy *gratis*. The master, too, is sensible that he is seen in this light; and how much this must lessen that affectionate regard to the learners which alone can sweeten the bitter labour of instruction, and convert the whole business into unwelcome and uninteresting task-work, many preceptors that I have conversed with on the subject are ready, with a sad heart, to acknowledge. From this inconvenience the settled salaries of the masters of this school in great measure exempt them; while the happy custom of chusing masters (indeed every officer of the establishment) from those who have received their education there, gives them an interest in advancing the character of the school, and binds them to

observe a tenderness and a respect to the children, in which a stranger, feeling that independence which I have spoken of, might well be expected to fail.

In affectionate recollections of the place where he was bred up, in hearty recognitions of old schoolfellows met with again after the lapse of years, or in foreign countries, the Christ's Hospital boy yields to none; I might almost say, he goes beyond most other boys. The very compass and magnitude of the school, its thousand bearings, the space it takes up in the imagination beyond the ordinary schools, impresses a remembrance, accompanied with an elevation of mind, that attends him through life. It is too big, too affecting an object, to pass away quickly from his mind. The Christ's Hospital boy's friends at school are commonly his intimates through life. For me, I do not know whether a constitutional imbecility does not incline me too obstinately to cling to the remembrances of childhood; in an inverted ratio to the usual sentiments of mankind, nothing that I have been engaged in since seems of any value or importance, compared to the colours which imagination gave to everything then. I belong to no *body corporate* such as I then made a part of.—And here, before I close, taking leave of the general reader, and addressing myself solely to my old schoolfellows, that were contemporaries with me from the year 1782 to 1789, let me have leave to remember some of those circumstances of our school, which they will not be unwilling to have brought back to their minds.

And first, let us remember, as first in importance in our childish eyes, the young men (as they almost were) who, under the denomination of *Grecians*, were waiting the expiration of the period when they should be sent, at the charges of the Hospital, to one or other of our Universities, but more frequently to Cambridge. These youths, from their superior acquirements, their superior age and stature, and the fewness of their numbers, (for seldom above two or three at a time were inaugurated into that high order), drew the eyes of all, and especially of the younger boys, into a reverent observance and admiration. How tall they used to seem to us!—how stately would they pace along the cloisters!—while the play of the lesser boys was absolutely suspended, or its boisterousness at least allayed, at their presence! Not that they ever beat or struck the boys—that would have been to have demeaned themselves—the dignity of their persons alone insured them all respect. The task of blows, or corporal chastisement, they left to the common

monitors, or heads of wards, who, it must be confessed, in our time had rather too much licence allowed them to oppress and misuse their inferiors; and the interference of the Grecian, who may be considered as the spiritual power, was not unfrequently called for, to mitigate by its mediation the heavy unrelenting arm of this temporal power, or monitor. In fine, the Grecians were the solemn Muftis of the school. Æras were computed from their time; it used to be said, such or such a thing was done when S—— or T—— was Grecian.

As I ventured to call the Grecians the Muftis of the school, the king's boys,[1] as their character then was, may well pass for the Janissaries. They were the terror of all the other boys; bred up under that hardy sailor, as well as excellent mathematician, and co-navigator with Captain Cook, William Wales. All his systems were adapted to fit them for the rough element which they were destined to encounter. Frequent and severe punishments, which were expected to be borne with more than Spartan fortitude, came to be considered less as inflictions of disgrace than as trials of obstinate endurance. To make his boys hardy, and to give them early sailor-habits, seemed to be his only aim; to this everything was subordinate. Moral obliquities, indeed, were sure of receiving their full recompense, for no occasion of laying on the lash was ever let slip; but the effects expected to be produced from it were something very different from contrition or mortification. There was in William Wales a perpetual fund of humour, a constant glee about him, which, heightened by an inveterate provincialism of North-country dialect, absolutely took away the sting from his severities. His punishments were a game at patience, in which the master was not always worst contented when he found himself at times overcome by his pupil. What success this discipline had, or how the effects of it operated upon the after-lives of these king's boys, I cannot say: but I am sure that, for the time, they were absolute nuisances to the rest of the school. Hardy, brutal, and often wicked, they were the most graceless lump in the whole mass; older and bigger than the other boys, (for, by the system of their education they were kept longer at school by two or three years than any of the rest, except the Grecians,) they were a constant terror to the younger part of the school; and some who may read this, I doubt not, will remember the consternation into which the juvenile fry of us were thrown,

[1] The mathematical pupils, bred up to the sea, on the foundation of Charles the Second.

when the cry was raised in the cloisters, that *the First Order was coming*—for so they termed the first form or class of those boys. Still these sea-boys answered some good purposes in the school. They were the military class among the boys, foremost in athletic exercises, who extended the fame of the prowess of the school far and near; and the apprentices in the vicinage, and sometimes the butchers' boys in the neighbouring market, had sad occasion to attest their valour.

The time would fail me if I were to attempt to enumerate all those circumstances, some pleasant, some attended with some pain, which, seen through the mist of distance, come sweetly softened to the memory. But I must crave leave to remember our transcending superiority in those invigorating sports, leap-frog, and basting the bear; our delightful excursions in the summer holidays to the New River, near Newington, where, like otters, we would live the long day in the water, never caring for dressing ourselves when we had once stripped; our savoury meals afterwards, when we came home almost famished with staying out all day without our dinners; our visits at other times to the Tower, where, by antient privilege, we had free access to all the curiosities; our solemn processions through the City at Easter, with the Lord Mayor's largess of buns, wine, and a shilling, with the festive questions and civic pleasantries of the dispensing Aldermen, which were more to us than all the rest of the banquet; our stately suppings in public, where the well-lighted hall, and the confluence of well-dressed company who came to see us, made the whole look more like a concert or assembly, than a scene of a plain bread and cheese collation; the annual orations upon St. Matthew's day, in which the senior scholar, before he had done, seldom failed to reckon up, among those who had done honour to our school by being educated in it, the names of those accomplished critics and Greek scholars, Joshua Barnes and Jeremiah Markland (I marvel they left out Camden while they were about it). Let me have leave to remember our hymns and anthems, and well-toned organ; the doleful tune of the burial anthem chanted in the solemn cloisters, upon the seldom-occurring funeral of some school-fellow; the festivities at Christmas, when the richest of us would club our stock to have a gaudy day, sitting round the fire, replenished to the height with logs, and the penniless, and he that could contribute nothing, partook in all the mirth, and in some of the substantialities of the feasting; the carol sung by night at that time of the year, which, when a young

GEORGE DYER

Engraved by J. Cristall
after the painting by Elizabeth Cristall.

See p. 53

boy, I have so often lain awake to hear from seven (the hour of going to bed) till ten, when it was sung by the older boys and monitors, and have listened to it, in their rude chanting, till I have been transported in fancy to the fields of Bethlehem, and the song which was sung at that season by angels' voices to the shepherds.

Nor would I willingly forget any of those things which administered to our vanity. The hem-stitched bands, and town-made shirts, which some of the most fashionable among us wore; the town-girdles, with buckles of silver, or shining stone; the badges of the sea-boys; the cots, or superior shoe-strings of the monitors; the medals of the markers, (those who were appointed to hear the Bible read in the wards on Sunday morning and evening), which bore on their obverse in silver, as certain parts of our garments carried in meaner metal, the countenance of our Founder, that godly and royal child, King Edward the Sixth, the flower of the Tudor name—the young flower that was untimely cropt as it began to fill our land with its early odours—the boy-patron of boys—the serious and holy child who walked with Cranmer and Ridley—fit associate, in those tender years, for the bishops and future martyrs of our Church, to receive, or, (as occasion sometimes proved), to give instruction.

> But, ah! what means the silent tear?
> Why, e'en 'mid joy, my bosom heave?
> Ye long-lost scenes, enchantments dear!
> Lo! now I linger o'er your grave.
>
> —Fly, then, ye hours of rosy hue,
> And bear away the bloom of years!
> And quick succeed, ye sickly crew
> Of doubts and sorrows, pains and fears!
>
> Still will I ponder Fate's unalter'd plan.
> Nor, tracing back the child, forget that I am man.[1]

ON THE MELANCHOLY OF TAILORS

> Sedet, æternumque sedebit,
> Infelix Theseus. VIRGIL.

THAT there is a professional melancholy, if I may so express myself, incident to the occupation of a tailor, is a fact which I think very few will venture to dispute. I may safely appeal to my readers, whether they ever knew one of that faculty

[1] Lines meditated in the cloisters of Christ's Hospital, in the "Poetics" of Mr. George Dyer.

that was not of a temperament, to say the least, far removed from mercurial or jovial.

Observe the suspicious gravity of their gait. The peacock is not more tender, from a consciousness of his peculiar infirmity, than a gentleman of this profession is of being known by the same infallible testimonies of his occupation. "Walk, that I may know thee."

Do you ever see him go whistling along the foot-path like a carman, or brush through a crowd like a baker, or go smiling to himself like a lover? Is he forward to thrust into mobs, or to make one at the ballad-singer's audiences? Does he not rather slink by assemblies and meetings of the people, as one that wisely declines popular observation?

How extremely rare is a noisy tailor! a mirthful and obstreperous tailor!

"At my nativity," says Sir Thomas Browne, "my ascendant was the earthly sign of Scorpius; I was born in the planetary hour of Saturn, and I think I have a piece of that leaden planet in me." One would think that he were anatomizing a tailor! save that to the latter's occupation, methinks, a woollen planet would seem more consonant, and that he should be born when the sun was in Aries.—He goes on. "I am no way facetious, nor disposed for the mirth and galliardize of company." How true a type of the whole trade! Eminently economical of his words, you shall seldom hear a jest come from one of them. He sometimes furnishes subject for a repartee, but rarely (I think) contributes one *ore proprio*.

Drink itself does not seem to elevate him, or at least to call out of him any of the external indications of vanity. I cannot say that it never causes his pride to swell, but it never breaks out. I am even fearful that it may swell and rankle to an alarming degree inwardly. For pride is near of kin to melancholy;—a hurtful obstruction from the ordinary outlets of vanity being shut. It is this stoppage which engenders proud humours. Therefore a tailor may be proud. I think he is never vain. The display of his gaudy patterns in that book of his which emulates the rainbow, never raises any inflations of that emotion in him, corresponding to what the wig-maker (for instance) evinces, when he expatiates on a curl or a bit of hair. He spreads them forth with a sullen incapacity for pleasure, a real or affected indifference to grandeur. Cloth of gold neither seems to elate, nor cloth of frize to depress him—according to the beautiful motto which formed the modest impresе of the shield worn by

Charles Brandon at his marriage with the king's sister. Nay, I doubt whether he would discover any vainglorious complacence in his colours, though "Iris" herself "dipt the woof."

In further corroboration of this argument—who ever saw the wedding of a tailor announced in the newspapers, or the birth of his eldest son?

When was a tailor known to give a dance, or to be himself a good dancer, or to perform exquisitely on the tight rope, or to shine in any such light and airy pastimes? to sing, or play on the violin?

Do they much care for public rejoicings, lightings up, ringing of bells, firing of cannons, etc.?

Valiant I know they can be; but I appeal to those who were witnesses to the exploits of Eliot's famous troop, whether in their fiercest charges they betrayed any thing of that thoughtless oblivion of death with which a Frenchman jigs into battle, or whether they did not show more of the melancholy valour of the Spaniard, upon whom they charged; that deliberate courage which contemplation and sedentary habits breathe?

Are they often great newsmongers?—I have known some few among them arrive at the dignity of speculative politicians; but that light and cheerful every-day interest in the affairs and goings-on of the world, which makes the barber [1] such delightful company, I think is rarely observable in them.

This characteristic pensiveness in them being so notorious, I wonder none of those writers, who have expressly treated of melancholy, should have mentioned it. Burton, whose book is an excellent abstract of all the authors in that kind who preceded him, and who treats of every species of this malady, from the *hypochondriacal* or *windy* to the *heroical* or *love melancholy*, has strangely omitted it. Shakspeare himself has overlooked it. "I have neither the scholar's melancholy (saith

[1] Having incidentally mentioned the barber, in a comparison of professional temperaments, I hope no other trade will take offence, or look upon it as an incivility done to them, if I say, that in courtesy, humanity, and all the conversational and social graces which "gladden life," I esteem no profession comparable to his. Indeed, so great is the good-will which I bear to this useful and agreeable body of men, that, residing in one of the Inns of Court (where the best specimens of them are to be found, except perhaps at the universities) there are seven of them to whom I am personally known, and who never pass me without the compliment of the hat on either side. My truly polite and urbane friend, Mr. A——m, of Flower-de-luce Court, in Fleet-street, will forgive my mention of him in particular. I can truly say, that I never spent a quarter of an hour under his hands without deriving some profit from the agreeable discussions, which are always going on there.

Jaques) which is emulation; nor the courtier's, which is proud; nor the soldier's, which is politick; nor the lover's, which is all these:"—and then, when you might expect him to have brought in, "nor the tailor's, which is so and so"—he comes to an end of his enumeration, and falls to a defining of his own melancholy.

Milton likewise has omitted it, where he had so fair an opportunity of bringing it in, in his *Penseroso*.

But the partial omissions of historians proving nothing against the existence of any well-attested fact, I shall proceed and endeavour to ascertain the causes why this pensive turn should be so predominant in people of this profession above all others.

And first, may it not be, that the custom of wearing apparel being derived to us from the fall, and one of the most mortifying products of that unhappy event, a certain *seriousness* (to say no more of it) may in the order of things have been intended to be impressed upon the minds of that race of men to whom in all ages the care of contriving the human apparel has been entrusted,—to keep up the memory of the first institution of clothes and serve as a standing remonstrance against those vanities, which the absurd conversion of a memorial of our shame into an ornament of our persons was destined to produce? Correspondent in some sort to this, it may be remarked, that the tailor sitting over a cave or hollow place, in the cabbalistic language of his order, is said to have *certain melancholy regions* always open under his feet. — But waiving further inquiry into final causes, where the best of us can only wander in the dark, let us try to discover the efficient causes of this melancholy.

I think, then, that they may be reduced to two, omitting some subordinate ones, viz.,

The sedentary habits of the tailor.—
Something peculiar in his diet.—

First, his *sedentary habits*. — In Doctor Norris's famous narrative of the frenzy of Mr. John Dennis, the patient, being questioned as to the occasion of the swelling in his legs, replies that it came "by criticism": to which the learned doctor seeming to demur, as to a distemper which he had never read of, Dennis (who appears not to have been mad upon all subjects) rejoins with some warmth, that it was no distemper, but a noble art! that he had sat fourteen hours a day at it: and that the other was a pretty doctor not to know that there was a communication between the brain and the legs.

When we consider that this sitting for fourteen hours continuously, which the critic probably practised only while he was writing his "remarks," is no more than what the tailor, in the ordinary pursuance of his art, submits to daily (Sundays excepted) throughout the year, shall we wonder to find the brain affected, and in a manner over-clouded, from that indissoluble sympathy between the noble and less noble parts of the body, which Dennis hints at? The unnatural and painful manner of his sitting must also greatly aggravate the evil, insomuch that I have sometimes ventured to liken tailors at their boards to so many envious Junos, *sitting cross-legged to hinder the birth of their own felicity*. The legs transversed thus ⋈ crosswise, or decussated, was among the ancients the posture of malediction. The Turks, who practise it at this day, are noted to be a melancholy people.

Secondly, his *diet*.—To which purpose I find a most remarkable passage in Burton, in his chapter entitled "Bad diet a cause of melancholy." "Amongst herbs to be eaten (he says) I find gourds, cucumbers, melons, disallowed; but especially CABBAGE. It causeth troublesome dreams, and sends up black vapours to the brain. Galen, *loc. affect.* lib. 3, cap. 6, of all herbs condemns CABBAGE. And Isaack, lib. 2, cap. 1, *animæ gravitatem facit*, it brings heaviness to the soul." I could not omit so flattering a testimony from an author, who, having no theory of his own to serve, has so unconsciously contributed to the confirmation of mine. It is well known that this last-named vegetable has, from the earliest periods which we can discover, constituted almost the sole food of this extraordinary race of people.

BURTON, *Junior*.

ON NEEDLEWORK

BY MARY LAMB

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "BRITISH LADY'S MAGAZINE"

MR. EDITOR,—In early life I passed eleven years in the exercise of my needle for a livelihood. Will you allow me to address your readers, among whom might perhaps be found some of the kind patronesses of my former humble labours, on a subject widely connected with female life — the state of needlework in this country.

To lighten the heavy burthen which many ladies impose upon themselves is one object which I have in view; but, I confess, my strongest motive is to excite attention towards the industrious sisterhood to which I once belonged.

From books I had been informed of the fact, upon which the *British Lady's Magazine* chiefly founds its pretensions, namely, that women have of late been rapidly advancing in intellectual improvement. Much may have been gained in this way, indirectly, for that class of females for whom I wish to plead. Needlework and intellectual improvement are naturally in a state of warfare. But I am afraid the root of the evil has not as yet been struck at. Workwomen of every description were never in so much distress for want of employment.

Among the present circle of my acquaintance I am proud to rank many that may truly be called respectable; nor do the female part of them, in their mental attainments, at all disprove the prevailing opinion of that intellectual progression which you have taken as the basis of your work; yet I affirm that I know not a single family where there is not some essential drawback to its comfort which may be traced to needlework *done at home*, as the phrase is for all needlework performed in a family by some of its members, and for which no remuneration in money is received or expected.

In money alone, did I say? I would appeal to all the fair votaries of voluntary housewifery, whether, in the matter of conscience, any one of them ever thought she had done as much needlework as she ought to have done. Even fancy work, the fairest of the tribe!—how delightful the arrangement of her materials! the fixing upon her happiest pattern, how pleasing an anxiety! how cheerful the commencement of the labour she enjoins! But that lady must be a true lover of the art, and so industrious a pursuer of a predetermined purpose, that it were pity her energy should not have been directed to some wiser end, who can affirm she neither feels weariness during the execution of a fancy piece, nor takes more time than she had calculated for the performance.

Is it too bold an attempt to persuade your readers that it would prove an incalculable additon to general happiness, and the domestic comfort of both sexes, if needlework were never practised but for a remuneration in money? As nearly, however, as the desirable thing can be effected, so much more nearly will women be upon an equality with men, as far as

respects the mere enjoyment of life. As far as that goes, I believe it is every woman's opinion that the condition of men is far superior to her own.

"They can do what they like," we say. Do not these words generally mean, they have time to seek out whatever amusements suit their tastes? We dare not tell them we have no time to do this; for, if they should ask in what manner we dispose of our time, we should blush to enter upon a detail of the minutiæ which compose the sum of a woman's daily employment. Nay, many a lady who allows not herself one quarter of an hour's positive leisure during her waking hours, considers her own husband as the most industrious of men, if he steadily pursue his occupation till the hour of dinner, and will be perpetually lamenting her own idleness.

Real business and *real leisure* make up the portions of men's time—two sources of happiness which we certainly partake of in a very inferior degree. To the execution of employment, in which the faculties of the body or mind are called into busy action, there must be a consoling importance attached, which feminine duties (that generic term for all our business) cannot aspire to.

In the most meritorious discharges of those duties, the highest praise we can aim at is to be accounted the helpmates of *man*; who, in return for all he does for us, expects, and justly expects, us to do all in our power to soften and sweeten life.

In how many ways is a good woman employed, in thought or action, through the day, in order that her *good man* may be enabled to feel his leisure hours *real substantial holyday*, and perfect respite from the cares of business! Not the least part to be done to accomplish this end is to fit herself to become a conversational companion; that is to say, she has to study and understand the subjects on which he loves to talk. This part of our duty, if strictly performed, will be found by far our hardest part. The disadvantages we labour under from an education differing from a manly one make the hours in which we *sit and do nothing* in men's company too often anything but a relaxation; although, as to pleasure and instruction, time so passed may be esteemed more or less delightful.

To make a man's home so desirable a place as to preclude his having a wish to pass his leisure hours at any fireside in preference to his own, I should humbly take to be the sum and substance of woman's domestic ambition. I would appeal to our *British ladies*, who are generally allowed to be the most zealous and successful of all women in the pursuit of this object,

—I would appeal to them who have been most successful in the performance of this laudable service, in behalf of father, son, husband, or brother, whether an anxious desire to perform this duty well is not attended with enough of *mental* exertion, at least, to incline them to the opinion that women may be more properly ranked among the contributors to, than the partakers of, the undisturbed relaxation of man.

If a family be so well ordered that the master is never called in to its direction, and yet he perceives comfort and economy well attended to, the mistress of that family (especially if children form a part of it) has, I apprehend, as large a share of womanly employment as ought to satisfy her own sense of duty; even though the needle-book and thread-case were quite laid aside, and she cheerfully contributed her part to the slender gains of the corset-maker, the milliner, the dress-maker, the plain-worker, the embroidress, and all the numerous classifications of females supporting themselves by *needlework*, that great staple commodity which is alone appropriated to the self-supporting part of our sex.

Much has been said and written on the subject of men engrossing to themselves every occupation and calling. After many years of observation and reflection, I am obliged to acquiesce in the notion that it cannot well be ordered otherwise.

If at the birth of girls it were possible to foresee in what cases it would be their fortune to pass a single life, we should soon find trades wrested from their present occupiers, and transferred to the exclusive possession of our sex. The whole mechanical business of copying writings in the law department, for instance, might very soon be transferred with advantage to the poorer sort of women, who with very little teaching would soon beat their rivals of the other sex in facility and neatness. The parents of female children, who were known to be destined from their birth to maintain themselves through the whole course of their lives with like certainty as their sons are, would feel it a duty incumbent on themselves to strengthen the minds, and even the bodily constitutions, of their girls, so circumstanced, by an education which, without affronting the preconceived habits of society, might enable them to follow some occupation now considered above the capacity or too robust for the constitution of our sex. Plenty of resources would then lie open for single women to obtain an independent livelihood, when every parent would be upon the alert to encroach upon some employment, now engrossed by men, for such of their daughters

as would then be exactly in the same predicament as their sons now are. Who, for instance, would lay by money to set up his sons in trade; give premiums, and in part maintain them through a long apprenticeship; or, which men of moderate incomes frequently do, strain every nerve in order to bring them up to a learned profession; if it were in a very high degree probable that, by the time they were twenty years of age, they would be taken from this trade or profession, and maintained during the remainder of their lives by the *person whom they should marry*. Yet this is precisely the situation in which every parent, whose income does not very much exceed the moderate, is placed with respect to his daughters.

Even where boys have gone through a laborious education, superinducing habits of steady attention, accompanied with the entire conviction that the business which they learn is to be the source of their future distinction, may it not be affirmed that the persevering industry required to accomplish this desirable end causes many a hard struggle in the minds of young men, even of the most hopeful disposition? What then must be the disadvantages under which a very young woman is placed who is required to learn a trade, from which she can never expect to reap any profit, but at the expence of losing that place in society, to the possession of which she may reasonably look forward, inasmuch as it is by far the most *common lot*, namely, the condition of a *happy* English wife?

As I desire to offer nothing to the consideration of your readers but what, at least as far as my own observation goes, I consider as truths confirmed by experience, I will only say that, were I to follow the bent of my own speculative opinion, I should be inclined to persuade every female over whom I hoped to have any influence to contribute all the assistance in her power to those of her own sex who may need it, in the employments they at present occupy, rather than to force them into situations now filled wholly by men. With the mere exception of the profits which they have a right to derive from their needle, I would take nothing from the industry of man which he already possesses.

"A penny saved is a penny earned," is a maxim not true, unless the penny be saved in the same time in which it might have been earned. I, who have known what it is to work for *money earned*, have since had much experience in working for *money saved*; and I consider, from the closest calculation I can make, that a *penny saved* in that way bears about a true

proportion to a *farthing earned*. I am no advocate for women, who do not depend on themselves for a subsistence, proposing to themselves to *earn money*. My reasons for thinking it not advisable are too numerous to state—reasons deduced from authentic facts, and strict observations on domestic life in its various shades of comfort. But if the females of a family, *nominally* supported by the other sex, find it necessary to add something to the common stock, why not endeavour to do something by which they may produce money *in its true shape*?

It would be an excellent plan, attended with very little trouble, to calculate every evening how much money has been saved by needlework *done in the family*, and compare the result with the daily portion of the yearly income. Nor would it be amiss to make a memorandum of the time passed in this way, adding also a guess as to what share it has taken up in the thoughts and conversation. This would be an easy mode of forming a true notion, and getting at the exact worth of this species of home industry, and perhaps might place it in a different light from any in which it has hitherto been the fashion to consider it.

Needlework, taken up as an amusement, may not be altogether unamusing. We are all pretty good judges of what entertains ourselves, but it is not so easy to pronounce upon what may contribute to the entertainment of others. At all events, let us not confuse the motives of economy with those of simple pastime. If *saving* be no object, and long habit have rendered needlework so delightful an avocation that we cannot think of relinquishing it, there are the good old contrivances in which our grand-dames were used to beguile and lose their time—knitting, knotting, netting, carpet working, and the like ingenious pursuits—those so-often-praised but tedious works, which are so long in the operation, that purchasing the labour has seldom been thought good economy, yet, by a certain fascination, they have been found to chain down the great to a self-imposed slavery, from which they considerately, or haughtily, excuse the needy. These may be esteemed lawful and ladylike amusements. But, if those works, more usually denominated useful, yield greater satisfaction, it might be a laudable scruple of conscience, and no bad test to herself of her own motive, if a lady, who had no absolute need, were to give the money so saved to poor needle-women belonging to those branches of employment from which she has borrowed these shares of pleasurable labour.

SEMPRONIP.

A TRUE STORY

TO THE "INDICATOR"

SIR,—When I was a young boy, I had delicate health, and was somewhat of a pensive and contemplative turn of mind: it was my delight in the long summer evenings to slip away from my noisy and more robust companions, that I might walk in the shade of a venerable wood, my favourite haunt, and listen to the cawing of the old rooks, who seemed as fond of this retreat as I was.

One evening I sat later than usual, though the distant sound of the cathedral clock had more than once warned me to my home. There was a stillness in all nature that I was unwilling to disturb by the least motion. From this reverie I was suddenly startled by the sight of a tall slender female who was standing by me, looking sorrowfully and steadily in my face. She was dressed in white, from head to foot, in a fashion I had never seen before; her garments were unusually long and flowing, and rustled as she glided through the low shrubs near me as if they were made of the richest silk. My heart beat as if I was dying, and I knew not that I could have stirred from the spot; but she seemed so very mild and beautiful, I did not attempt it. Her pale brown hair was braided round her head, but there were some locks that strayed upon her neck; and altogether she looked like a lovely picture, but not like a living woman. I closed my eyes forcibly with my hands, and when I looked again she had vanished.

I cannot exactly say why I did not on my return speak of this beautiful appearance, nor why, with a strange mixture of hope and fear, I went again and again to the same spot that I might see her. She always came, and often in the storm and plashing rain, that never seemed to touch or to annoy her, and looked sweetly at me, and silently passed on; and though she was so near to me, that once the wind lifted those light straying locks, and I felt them against my cheek, yet I never could move or speak to her. I fell ill; and when I recovered, my mother closely questioned me of the tall lady, of whom, in the height of my fever, I had so often spoken.

I cannot tell you what a weight was taken from my boyish spirits, when I learnt that this was no apparition, but a most lovely woman; not young, though she had kept her young looks,

cloud which is so lingeringly kept between them and their promised bliss. The half-peeled orange laid aside when the play begins; their anxiety for that which they understand; their honest laughter which runs through the house like a merry peal of sweet bells; the fear of the little girl lest they should discover the person hid behind the screen; the exultation of the boy when the hero conquers.

But oh the rapture when the pantomime commences! Ready to leap out of the box, they joy in the mischief of the clown, laugh at the thwacks he gets for his medling, and feel no small portion of contempt for his ignorance in not knowing that hot water will scald and gun powder explode; while with head aside to give fresh energy to the strokes, they ring their little palms against each other in testimony of exuberant delight.

Who can behold them without reflecting on the many passions that now lie dormant in their bosoms, to be in a few years agitating themselves and the world. Here the coquet begins to appear in the attention paid to a lace frock or kid gloves for the first time displayed, or the domestic tyrant in the selfish boy, who snatches the largest cake, or thrusts his younger brother and sister from the best place.

At no season of the year are their holidays so replete with pleasures; the expected Christmas-box from grand-papa and grand-mamma; plum-pudding and snap-dragon, with blind-man's buff and forfeits; perhaps to witness a juvenile play rehearsed and ranted; galantée-show and drawing for twelfth-cake; besides Christmas-gambols in abundance, new and old.

Even the poor charity-boy at this season feels a transient glow of cheerfulness, as with pale blue face, frost-nipped hands, and ungreatcoated, from door to door he timidly displays the unblotted scutcheon of his graphic talents, and feels that the pence bestowed are his *own*, and that for once in his life he may taste the often desired tart, or spin a top which no one can snatch from him in capricious tyranny.

I know not whether it be the dotage of age coming over me, but when I see or think of these little beings, I feel as a child again, my heart warms to them, I enter into their joys and sorrows, their pastimes and their thousand imaginings; and fancy I could fly a kite or wield a bat with the best of them; nor is any thing more refreshing to me after much intercourse with the heartlessness and affectation of the world, than the society of intelligent and amiable children.

Desiring to be kindly remembered to your little folk, Mr.

Indicator, (if you have any) and wishing them and you abundance of fun and pastime this Christmas, I remain, your sincere well-wisher,

An Old Boy.

OLD MAIDS

TO THE "INDICATOR"

Mr. Indicator,—To you I apply as to a person of known humanity, to take up your pen in a cause which would do you no dishonour, and which I do not fear that you should disdain; the defence of Old Maids.

Old Maid is, I am sorry to say it, commonly used as a term of reproach: an Old Maid is an object of general ridicule; and is there not injustice and even cruelty in this? Do people speak of curiosity, of prudery, of scandal, or of ill-temper, they speak of them as the common attributes of an Old Maid. From my own experience I have not found that these ill qualities are more common to Old Maids than to others: nay, one of the most amiable women whom I know is an Old Maid; and the most prying, scandal-loving, and ill-tempered woman that I know, or ever did know, has been twice married.

An Old Maid may have a kind and affectionate heart, she might have been an excellent wife and a tender mother, probably she may have survived her parents; her brothers and sisters may have married and dispersed about the world, and she be left alone; she has no power to make one human being happy, no one studies to make *her* happy. There is no one to whom she is the nearest and dearest; none take an interest in her pursuits; no one desires that she should take an interest in theirs: her heart is like the dove which Noah sent forth from the ark; it is lone and weary, and can find no place of rest.

She sees a mother smile upon the child she presses to her bosom; and she at the happy sight smiles too, but she smiles sadly, for she has no dear child to press to *her* bosom. She sees the young mother present her new-born babe to the husband whom she loves, she smiles at their happiness, but oh how her heart sickens! she too has loved, loved deeply; he whom she loved is lost to her for ever: in that moment the sweetest dreams of early hope strike upon her heart, they never can be realised; the tears are in her eyes, she stoops to kiss the child and so she hides them; she would not obtrude *her* sorrows upon the

happiness of such a moment. Great God! must the privation of domestic happiness be yet further embittered by prejudices? Must unkindness and scorn be heaped on her who has none to soothe her? How many unhappy unions have been formed from a fear of encountering the mortifications attendant on a single life! I have not found that the faults attributed to Old Maids are at all more common to them than to others; but were it so, we might believe that the stigma which rests upon them may tend to injure the temper; and we might consider too, that they have not that strong incentive to the correction of natural foibles, which may influence happier women. Singleness of life in women should be respected as misfortune, for it is scarcely ever the effect of a free choice; it is almost always occasioned either by pecuniary difficulties, by an unfortunate attachment, or by such deficiency of personal attractions, as leaves it not to their choice at all.

You, Mr. Indicator, whose admiration of feminine beauty is yet surpassed by your love of human kindness, will not, I am convinced, refuse to consider a subject in which so large a portion of the female world are interested. I have but faintly hinted at the mortifications to which an Old Maid is exposed; but could I have found heart to do it, I could have related a history which would draw tears from sterner eyes than yours, and excite feelings of sympathy even for

An Old Maid.

MRS. B.

Mr. Indicator,—I am in a situation of unspeakable misery. You will perhaps believe that I am in some pecuniary distress, or that by death or by absence I have lost a beloved friend, or that I have been crossed in love: I have experienced some of these troubles, but it is not of these that I mean to complain to you.

Poverty I have never known; I lost my mother before I was old enough to feel the loss. It is true I suffered much in parting with my father, who left England a few years since for Jamaica, where he now resides. As to being crossed in love, I have only myself to blame for that, for my father positively forbade me, under pain of his severe displeasure, ever to fall in love without his permission; but the misery I now endure, Mr. Indicator, I did not bring upon myself. It is my misfortune to live in a

WILLIAM HENRY LEIGH HUNT

Engraved by Meyer
from a drawing by J. Hayter.

See p. 70

country town. To you, Sir, I know it will appear the vilest heresy to say this; but have patience with me.

When my father left England, he placed me under the care of a widow lady, who, for my misfortune, has the reputation of being the most prudent of women. She is shocked beyond measure at what she calls my vicious propensities; and yet, Mr. Indicator, I am sure you, for whom I have the highest possible respect, would not object to any one of them.—I would have your candid opinion now.

I delight in Shakspeare;—I can only read him by stealth or open defiance (both very disagreeable to me), because Mrs. B. maintains that he is a very immoral author, whom no modest young woman would find pleasure in. She is indeed so careful of my morals, that she will not allow me to read any book, without first looking over it herself; and if she finds anything improper in it, she is not contented with merely looking it over, but so fearful is she of doing the author an injustice, that she reads it quite through before she pronounces sentence against it, and in that case I see it no more.

I take great pleasure in rambling in the fields and green lanes in the neighbourhood, where I have rarely met any person but a wood-cutter, a farmer, or some country labourer; but these rambles are forbidden me, because Mrs. B. insists that I take them for no other purpose than to meet "a certain person," as she denominates him whom she knows I should be most willing to meet, but that, alas! he is many miles from hence.

I have been taught music by an excellent master, and I have an absolute passion for this art; but I am not allowed to play or sing any thing but sacred music, because Mrs. B. says all profane music gives girls improper notions.

I have been taught French and Italian; but I am not allowed to read any book in either of these languages, because Mrs. B., who does not understand them, fears they might contain something improper.

Drawing, unfortunately I do not understand. There is a drawing-master in the town; but as with the exceptions of an ill-natured countenance and vulgar manners, he is a "very comely man, and is not more than fifty," Mrs. B. thinks it would be improper that I should receive lessons from him.

The only occupation she allows me to pursue without interruption is needlework, and for this I have an unconquerable aversion. I would ask you, Mr. Indicator, if forbidding me in this manner all occupation of mind would be likely to destroy

any vicious propensities? I would likewise ask you, Sir, if you consider as such the love of Shakspeare, of the fields, of music, and of books? I hope I shall ever preserve, and one day be able to gratify these propensities; yet if you condemn them, I will instantly sacrifice them all.

Having told you, Sir, what is forbidden me as improper, I will now add what is enjoined me as proper; needlework as an occupation, and the society of female neighbours as a relaxation. Now, to my vicious taste nothing can be more unpleasant, or at the best insipid, than a company of females only, and those uneducated females, in a country town. I do not mean that a person may not be very amiable, without being what is called well educated; but the persons I mean are very illiterate people, who mix in very illiterate society, and who are so wrapped up in ignorance and prejudice, that while they admire excellence without knowing it, they hate it because they cannot attain it. With such people my evenings are passed; it is upon such people that I am to depend for amusement and for improvement. As to your papers, Sir, I can only read them by stealth, for you are particularly odious to Mrs. B.—I am, Sir, a respectful admirer,

F. N.

ELIA TO HIS CORRESPONDENTS

I

A WRITER, whose real name, it seems, is *Boldero*, but who has been entertaining the town for the last twelve months, with some very pleasant lucubrations, under the assumed signature of *Leigh Hunt*[1]; in his *Indicator*, of the 31st January last, has thought fit to insinuate, that I *Elia* do not write the little sketches which bear my signature, in this Magazine; but that the true author of them is a Mr. L——b. Observe the critical period at which he has chosen to impute the calumny!—on the very eve of the publication of our last number—affording no scope for explanation for a full month—during which time, I must needs lie writhing and tossing, under the cruel imputation of non-entity.—Good heavens! that a plain man must not be allowed *to be*——

[1] Clearly a fictitious appellation; for if we admit the latter of these names to be in a manner English, what is *Leigh*? Christian nomenclature knows no such.

They call this an age of personality: but surely this spirit of anti-personality (if I may so express it) is something worse.

Take away my moral reputation—I may live to discredit that calumny.

Injure my literary fame,—I may write that up again—

But when a gentleman is robbed of his identity, where is he?

Other murderers stab but at our existence, a frail and perishing trifle at the best. But here is an assassin, who aims at our very essence; who not only forbids us *to be* any longer, but *to have been* at all. Let our ancestors look to it.—

Is the parish register nothing? Is the house in Princes-street, Cavendish-square, where we saw the light six and forty years ago, nothing? Were our progenitors from stately Genoa, where we flourished four centuries back, before the barbarous name of Boldero[1] was known to a European mouth, nothing? Was the goodly scion of our name, transplanted into England, in the reign of the seventh Henry, nothing? Are the archives of the steel yard, in succeeding reigns (if haply they survive the fury of our envious enemies) showing that we flourished in prime repute, as merchants down to the period of the commonwealth, nothing?

> Why then the world, and all that's in't, is nothing—
> The covering sky is nothing, Bohemia nothing.—

I am ashamed that this trifling writer should have power to move me so.

II

A Correspondent, who writes himself Peter Ball, or Bell,—for his handwriting is as ragged as his manners,—admonishes me of the old saying, that some people (under a courteous periphrasis, I slur his less ceremonious epithet) had need have good memories. In my "Old Benchers of the Inner Temple," I have delivered myself, and truly, a Templar born. Bell clamours upon this, and thinketh that he hath caught a fox. It seems that in a former paper, retorting upon a weekly scribbler who had called my good identity in question, (see Postscript to my "Chapter on Ears,") I profess myself a native of some spot near Cavendish Square, deducing my remoter origin from Italy. But who does not see, except this tinkling cymbal, that, in that idle fiction of Genoese ancestry, I was answering a fool according to his folly,—that Elia there expresseth himself

[1] It is clearly of transatlantic origin.

ironically as to an approved slanderer, who hath no right to the truth, and can be no fit recipient of it? Such a one it is usual to leave to his delusions; or, leading him from error still to contradictory error, to plunge him (as we say) deeper in the mire, and give him line till he suspend himself. No understanding reader could be imposed upon by such obvious rodomontade to suspect me for an alien, or believe me other than English.

To a second correspondent, who signs himself "A Wiltshire Man," who claims me for a countryman upon the strength of an equivocal phrase in my "Christ's Hospital," a more mannerly reply is due. Passing over the Genoese fable, which Bell makes such a ring about, he nicely detects a more subtile discrepancy, which Bell was too obtuse to strike upon. Referring to the passage, I must confess, that the term "native town," applied to Calne, *primâ facie* seems to bear out the construction which my friendly correspondent is willing to put upon it. The context too, I am afraid, a little favours it. But where the words of an author, taken literally, compared with some other passage in his writings, admitted to be authentic, involve a palpable contradiction, it hath been the custom of the ingenuous commentator to smoothe the difficulty by the supposition that in the one case an allegorical or tropical sense was chiefly intended. So, by the word "native," I may be supposed to mean a town where I might have been born, or where it might be desirable that I should have been born, as being situated in wholesome air, upon a dry, chalky soil, in which I delight; or a town with the inhabitants of which I passed some weeks, a Summer or two ago, so agreeably, that they and it became in a manner native to me. Without some such latitude of interpretation in the present case, I see not how we can avoid falling into so gross an error in physics as to conceive that a gentleman may be born in two places, from which all modern and ancient testimony is alike abhorrent. Bacchus cometh the nearest to it, whom I remember Ovid to have honoured with the epithet "twice born."[1] But, not to mention that he is so called (we conceive) in reference to the places *whence* rather than the places *where* he was delivered,—for, by either birth, he may probably be challenged for a Theban,—in a strict way

[1] Imperfectus adhuc infans genetricis ab alvo
Eripitur, patrioque tener (si credere dignum est)
Insuitur femori. . . .
Tutaque bis geniti sunt incunabula Bacchi.
Metamorph., lib. iii.

of speaking, he was a *filius femoris* by no means in the same sense as he had been before a *filius alvi*; for that latter was but a secondary and tralatitious way of being born, and he but a denizen of the second house of his geniture. Thus much by way of explanation was thought due to the courteous "Wiltshire Man."

To "Indagator," "Investigator," "Incertus," and the rest of the pack, that are so importunate about the true localities of his birth,—as if, forsooth, Elia were presently about to be passed to his parish,—to all such churchwarden critics he answereth, that, any explanation here given notwithstanding, he hath not so fixed his nativity (like a rusty vane) to one dull spot, but that, if he seeth occasion, or the argument shall demand it, he will be born again in future papers, in whatever place, and at whatever period, shall seem good unto him.

Modò me Thebis, modò Athenis.

THE CONFESSIONS OF H. F. V. H. DELAMORE, ESQ.

Sackville-street, 25th March, 1821.

Mr. Editor,—A correspondent in your last Number,[1] blesses his stars, that he never was yet in the pillory; and, with a confidence which the uncertainty of mortal accidents but weakly justifies, goes on to predict that he never shall be. Twelve years ago, had a Sibyl prophesied to me, that I should live to be set in a worst place, I should have struck her for a lying beldam. There are degradations below that which he speaks of.

I come of a good stock, Mr. Editor. The Delamores are a race singularly tenacious of their honour; men who, in the language of Edmund Burke, feel a stain like a wound. My grand uncle died of a fit of the sullens for the disgrace of a public whipping at Westminster. He had not then attained his fourteenth year. Would I had died young!

For more than five centuries, the current of our blood hath flowed unimpeachably. And must it stagnate now?

Can a family be tainted backwards?—can posterity purchase disgrace for their progenitors?—or doth it derogate from the great Walter of our name, who received the sword

[1] Elia:—Chapter on Ears.

of knighthood in Cressy field, that one of his descendants once sate * * * * * * * * * * *?

Can an honour, fairly achieved in *quinto Edwardi Tertii*, be reversed by a slip in *quinquagesimo Georgii Tertii*?—how stands the law?—what *dictum* doth the college deliver?—O Clarencieux! O Norroy!

Can a reputation, gained by hard watchings on the cold ground, in a suit of mail, be impeached by hard watchings on the cold ground in other circumstances—was the endurance equal?—why is the guerdon so disproportionate?

A priest mediated the ransom of the too valorous Reginald, of our house, captived in Lord Talbot's battles. It was a clergyman, who by his intercession abridged the period of my durance.

Have you touched at my wrongs yet, Mr. Editor?—or must I be explicit as to my grievance?

Hush, my heedless tongue.

Something bids me—"Delamore, be ingenuous."

Once then, and only once——

Star of my nativity, hide beneath a cloud, while I reveal it!

Ancestors of Delamore, lie low in your wormy beds, that no posthumous hearing catch a sound!

Let no eye look over thee, while thou shalt peruse it, reader!

Once——

these legs, with Kent in the play, though for far less ennobling considerations, did wear "cruel garters."

Yet I protest it was but for a thing of nought—a fault of youth, and warmer blood—a calendary inadvertence I may call it—or rather a temporary obliviousness of the day of the week—timing my Saturnalia amiss.—

Streets of Barnet, infamous for civil broils, ye saw my shame!—did not your Red Rose rise again to dye my burning cheek?

It was but for a pair of minutes, or so—yet I feel, I feel, that the gentry of the Delamores is extinguished for ever.—

Try to forget it, reader.—

(Signed)

Henry Francis Vere Harrington Delamore.

ELIA ON HIS "CONFESSIONS OF A DRUNKARD"

MANY are the sayings of Elia, painful and frequent his lucubrations, set forth for the most part (such his modesty!) without a name; scattered about in obscure periodicals and forgotten miscellanies. From the dust of some of these it is our intention occasionally to revive a tract or two that shall seem worthy of a better fate, especially at a time like the present, when the pen of our industrious contributor, engaged in a laborious digest of his recent Continental tour, may haply want the leisure to expatiate in more miscellaneous speculations. We have been induced, in the first instance, to reprint a thing which he put forth in a friend's volume some years since, entitled "The Confessions of a Drunkard," seeing that Messieurs the Quarterly Reviewers have chosen to embellish their last dry pages with fruitful quotations therefrom; adding, from their peculiar brains, the gratuitous affirmation, that they have reason to believe that the describer (in his delineations of a drunkard, forsooth!) partly sat for his own picture. The truth is, that our friend had been reading among the essays of a contemporary, who has perversely been confounded with him, a paper in which Edax (or the Great Eater) humorously complaineth of an inordinate appetite; and it struck him that a better paper—of deeper interest and wider usefulness—might be made out of the imagined experiences of a Great Drinker.

Accordingly he set to work, and, with that mock fervour and counterfeit earnestness with which he is too apt to over-realise his descriptions, has given us a frightful picture indeed, but no more resembling the man Elia than the fictitious Edax may be supposed to identify itself with Mr. L., its author. It is indeed a compound extracted out of his long observations of the effects of drinking upon all the world about him; and this accumulated mass of misery he hath centred (as the custom is with judicious essayists) in a single figure. We deny not that a portion of his own experiences may have passed into the picture; (as who, that is not a washy fellow, but must at some times have felt the after-operation of a too-generous cup?) but then how heightened! how exaggerated! how little within the sense of the Review, where a part, in their slanderous usage, must be understood to stand for the whole! But it is useless to expostulate with this Quarterly slime, brood of Nilus, watery heads with hearts of jelly, spawned under the sign of Aquarius,

incapable of Bacchus, and therefore cold, washy, spiteful, bloodless. Elia shall string them up one day, and show their colours,—or rather, how colourless and vapid the whole fry,—when he putteth forth his long-promised, but unaccountably hitherto delayed, "Confessions of a Water-drinker."

THE GENTLE GIANTESS

The widow Blacket, of Oxford, is the largest female I ever had the pleasure of beholding. There may be her parallel upon the earth, but surely I never saw it. I take her to be lineally descended from the maid's aunt of Brainford, who caused Master Ford such uneasiness. She hath Atlantean shoulders; and, as she stoopeth in her gait—with as few offences to answer for in her own particular as any of Eve's daughters—her back seems broad enough to bear the blame of all the peccadillos that have been committed since Adam. She girdeth her waist—or what she is pleased to esteem as such—nearly up to her shoulders, from beneath which, that huge dorsal expanse, in mountainous declivity, emergeth. Respect for her alone preventeth the idle boys, who follow her about in shoals, whenever she cometh abroad, from getting up and riding. — But her presence infallibly commands a reverence. She is indeed, as the Americans would express it, something awful. Her person is a burthen to herself, no less than to the ground which bears her. To her mighty bone, she hath a pinguitude withal, which makes the depth of winter to her the most desirable season. Her distress in the warmer solstice is pitiable. During the months of July and August, she usually renteth a cool cellar, where ices are kept, whereinto she descendeth when Sirius rageth. She dates from a hot Thursday—some twenty-five years ago. Her apartment in summer is pervious to the four winds. Two doors, in north and south direction, and two windows, fronting the rising and the setting sun, never closed, from every cardinal point, catch the contributory breezes. She loves to enjoy what she calls a quadruple draught. That must be a shrewd zephyr, that can escape her. I owe a painful face-ach, which oppresses me at this moment, to a cold caught, sitting by her, one day in last July, at this receipt of coolness. Her fan in ordinary resembleth a banner spread, which she keepeth continually on the alert to detect the least breeze.

She possesseth an active and gadding mind, totally incommensurate with her person. No one delighteth more than herself in country exercises and pastimes. I have passed many an agreeable holiday with her in her favourite park at Woodstock. She performs her part in these delightful ambulatory excursions by the aid of a portable garden chair. She setteth out with you at a fair foot gallop, which she keepeth up till you are both well breathed, and then she reposeth for a few seconds. Then she is up again, for a hundred paces or so, and again resteth—her movements, on these sprightly occasions, being something between walking and flying. Her great weight seemeth to propel her forward, ostrich-fashion. In this kind of relieved marching I have traversed with her many scores of acres on those well-wooded and well-watered domains. Her delight at Oxford is in the public walks and gardens, where, when the weather is not too oppressive, she passeth much of her valuable time. There is a bench at Maudlin, or rather, situated between the frontiers of that and * * * * * *'s college—some litigation latterly, about repairs, has vested the property of it finally in * * * * * *'s—where at the hour of noon she is ordinarily to be found sitting—so she calls it by courtesy—but in fact, pressing and breaking of it down with her enormous settlement; as both those Foundations, who, however, are good-natured enough to wink at it, have found, I believe, to their cost. Here she taketh the fresh air, principally at vacation times, when the walks are freest from interruptions of the younger fry of students. Here she passeth her idle hours, not idly, but generally accompanied with a book —blest if she can but intercept some resident Fellow (as usually there are some of that brood left behind at these periods); or stray Master of Arts (to most of whom she is better known than their dinner-bell); with whom she may confer upon any curious topic of literature. I have seen these shy gownsmen, who truly set but a very slight value upon female conversation, cast a hawk's eye upon her from the length of Maudlin grove, and warily glide off into another walk—true monks as they are, and ungently neglecting the delicacies of her polished converse, for their own perverse and uncommunicating solitariness! Within doors her principal diversion is music, vocal and instrumental, in both which she is no mean professor. Her voice is wonderfully fine; but till I got used to it, I confess it staggered me. It is for all the world like that of a piping bulfinch, while from her size and stature you would expect notes to drown the

deep organ. The shake, which most fine singers reserve for the close or cadence, by some unaccountable flexibility, or tremulousness of pipe, she carrieth quite through the composition; so that her time, to a common air or ballad, keeps double motion, like the earth—running the primary circuit of the tune, and still revolving upon its own axis. The effect, as I said before, when you are used to it, is as agreeable as it is altogether new and surprising. The spacious apartment of her outward frame lodgeth a soul in all respects disproportionate. Of more than mortal make, she evinceth withal a trembling sensibility, a yielding infirmity of purpose, a quick susceptibility to reproach, and all the train of diffident and blushing virtues, which for their habitation usually seek out a feeble frame, an attenuated and meagre constitution. With more than man's bulk, her humours and occupations are eminently feminine. She sighs —being six foot high. She languisheth—being two feet wide. She worketh slender sprigs upon the delicate muslin—her fingers being capable of moulding a Colossus. She sippeth her wine out of her glass daintily—her capacity being that of a tun of Heidelburg. She goeth mincingly with those feet of hers—whose solidity need not fear the black ox's pressure. Softest, and largest of thy sex, adieu! by what parting attribute may I salute thee—last and best of the Titanesses—Ogress, fed with milk instead of blood—not least, or least handsome, among Oxford's stately structures—Oxford, who, in its deadest time of vacation, can never properly be said to be empty, having thee to fill it.

ELIA.

A FEW WORDS ON CHRISTMAS

CLOSE the shutters, and draw the curtains together, and pile fresh wood upon the hearth! Let us have, for once, an innocent *auto da fè*. Let the hoarded corks be brought forth, and branches of crackling laurel. Place the wine and fruit and the hot chestnuts upon the table. And now, good folks and children, bring your chairs round to the blazing fire. Put some of those rosy apples upon your plates. We'll drink one glass of bright sherry "to our absent friends and readers," and then let us talk a little about Christmas.

And what is Christmas?

Why, it is the happiest time of the year. It is the season of

mirth and cold weather. It is the time when Christmas-boxes and jokes are given; when mistletoe, and red-berried laurel, and soups, and sliding, and school-boys, prevail; when the country is illuminated by fires and bright faces; and the town is radiant with laughing children. Oranges, as rich as the fruit of the Hesperides, shine out in huge golden heaps. Cakes, frosted over (as if to rival the glittering snow) come forth by thousands from their summer (caves) ovens: and on every stall at every corner of every street are the roasted apples, like incense fuming on Pagan altars.

And *this* night is CHRISTMAS EVE. Formerly it was a serious and holy vigil. Our forefathers observed it strictly till a certain hour, and then requited their own forbearance with cups of ale and Christmas candles, with placing the *yule clog* on the fire, and roaring themselves thirsty till morning. Time has altered this. We are neither so good as our forefathers were—nor so bad. We go to bed sober; but we have forgotten their old devotions. Our conduct looks like a sort of compromise; so that we are not worse than our ancestors, we are satisfied not to be better: but let that pass. What we now call Christmas Eve—(there is something very delightful in old terms: they had always their birth in reason or sentiment) was formerly *Mœdre-nack*, or *The Night of Mothers*? How beautifully does this recall to one's heart that holy tale—that wonderful nativity, which the Eastern shepherds went by night to gaze at and adore—

> (It was the winter wild,
> When the heaven-born child
> All meanly wrapp'd in the rude manger lay;)

a prodigy, which, had it been invention only, would have contained much that was immaculate and sublime; but, twined as it is with man's hopes and fears, is invested with a grand and overwhelming interest.

But to-night is Christmas Eve, and so we will be merry. Instead of toast and ale, we will content ourselves with our sherry and chestnuts; and we must put up with coffee or fragrant tea, instead of having the old *Wassail-bowl* which formed part of the inspiration of our elder poets. We were once admitted to the mysteries of that fine invention, and we respect it accordingly. Does anyone wish to know its merits? Let him try what he can produce, on our hint, and be grateful to us for ever. "The Wassail-bowl" is, indeed, a great composition. It is not carved by Benvenuto Cellini (the outside *may*,—but it is not material), nor shaped by Michael Angelo from the marble

quarries of Carrara; but it is a liquor fit for the lips of the Indian Bacchus, and worthy to celebrate his return from conquest. It is made — for, after all, we must descend to particulars—it is made of wine, with *some* water (but parce, precor, precor!) with spices of various sorts, and roasted apples, which float in triumph upon its top. The proportions of each are not important—in fact, they should be adapted to the taste of the drinkers. The only caution that seems necessary is to "spare the water." If the Compositor should live in the neighbourhood of Aldgate, this hint may be deemed advisable; though we mean no affront to either him or the pump.

One mark and sign of Christmas is the *music*; rude enough, indeed, but generally gay, and speaking eloquently of the season. Music, at festival times, is common to most countries. In Spain, the serenader twangs his guitar: in Italy, the musician allures rich notes from his Cremona: in Scotland, the bagpipe drones out its miserable noise: in Germany, there is the horn, and the pipe in Arcady. We too, in our turn, have our Christmas "*Waits*," who witch us at early morning, before cock-crow, with strains and welcomings which belong to night. They wake us so gently that the music seems to have commenced in our dreams, and we listen to it till we sleep again. Besides this, we have our songs, from the young and the old, jocose and fit for the time. What old gentleman of sixty has not his stock—his one, or two, or three frolicksome verses. He sings them for the young folks, and is secure of their applause and his own private satisfaction. His wife, indeed, perhaps says "*Really*, my dear Mr. Williams, you should *now* give over these, etc."; but he is more resolute from opposition, and gambols through his "Flowery Meads of May," or "Beneath a shady bower," while the children hang on his thin, trembling, untuneable notes in delighted and delightful amaze.

Many years ago (some forty-one,—or two,—or three) when we were at home "for the Christmas holidays," we occasionally heard these things. What a budget of songs we had! None of them were good for much; but they were sung by joyful spirits, amidst fun and laughter, loud and in defiance of tune, and we were enchanted. There was "Bright Chanticleer proclaims the dawn,"—and "'Twas in the good ship Rover,"—and, "Buy my matches,"—(oh! what an accompaniment there was with the flat hand and the elbow)—"The lobster claw,"—and others. We should be sorry to strip them, like "Majesty" in the riddle, of their merit first and last (our recollection) and

HE SINGS THEM FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS.

reduce them to "a jest." Yet they were indeed a jest, and a very pleasant one.—Of all the songs, however, which become a time of feasting, there is none comparable to one written by Beaumont and Fletcher. It is racy, and rich, and sparkling. It has the strength and regal taste of Burgundy, and the ethereal spirit of champaigne. Does the reader wish to see it? Here it is: the words seem floating in wine.

> God Lyæus—ever young,
> Ever honour'd, ever sung;
> Stain'd with blood of lusty grapes,
> In a thousand lusty shapes,
> Dance upon the mazer's brim,
> In the crimson liquor swim;
> From thy plenteous hand divine
> Let a river run with wine!

What a rioter was he that wrote this! His drink was not water from Hippocrene. His fountain flowed with wine. His goddess was a girl with purple lips; and his dreams were rich, like the autumn; but prodigal, wild, and Bacchanalian!

Leaving now our *eve* of Christmas, its jokes, and songs, and warm hearths, we will indulge ourselves in a few words upon CHRISTMAS DAY. It is like a day of victory. Every house and church is as green as spring. The laurel, that never dies, —the holly, with its armed leaves and scarlet berries,—the mistletoe, under which one sweet ceremonial is (we hope still) performed, are seen. Every brave shrub that has life and verdure seems to come forward to shame the reproaches of men, and to show them that the earth is never dead, never parsimonious. Then, what gay dresses are intermixed,—Art rivalling Nature! Woe to the rabbits and the hares, and the nut-cracking squirrels, the foxes, and all children of the woods, for furriers shall spoil them of their coats, to keep woman (the wonder of creation) warm! And woe to those damsels (fair anachronisms) who will not fence out the sharp winter; for rheumatisms and agues shall be theirs, and catarrhs shall be their portion in spring. But, look! what thing is this, awful and coloured like the rainbow,—blue, and red, and glistening yellow? Its vest is sky-tinctured! The edges of its garments are like the sun! Is it

> ——A faery vision
> Of some gay creature of the element,
> That in the colours of the rainbow lives,
> And plays i' the plighted clouds?

No;—it is the Beadle of St. ——'s! How Christmas and

consolatory he looks! How redolent of good cheer is he! He is a cornu-copia,—an abundance! What pudding-sleeves!—what a collar, red and like a beef-steak, is his! He is a walking refreshment! He looks like a *whole* parish,—full, important,—but untaxed. The children of charity gaze at him with a modest smile, the straggling boys look on him with confidence. They do not pocket their marbles. They do not fly from the familiar gutter. This is a red-letter day; and the cane is reserved for to-morrow.

London is not *too* populous at Christmas. But what there is of population looks more alive than at other times. Quick walking and heaps of invitations keep the blood warm. Every one seems hurrying to a dinner. The breath curls upward like smoke through the frosty air; the eyes glisten; the teeth are shown; the muscles of the face are rigid, and the colour of the cheek has a fixed look, like a stain. Hunger is no longer an enemy. We feed him, like the ravenous tiger, till he pants and sleeps, or is quiet. Everybody eats at Christmas. The rich feast as usual; but the tradesman leaves his moderate fare for dainties. The apprentice abjures his chop, and plunges at once into the luxuries of joints and puddings. The school-boy is no longer at school. He dreams no more of the coming lesson or the lifted rod; but mountains of jelly rise beside him, and blanc-mange, with its treacherous foundations, threatens to overwhelm his fancy; roods of mince pies spread out their chequered riches before him; and figures (only real on the 6th of January) pass by him, one by one, like ghosts before the vision of the King of Scotland. Even the servant has his "once a year" bottle of port; and the beggar his "alderman in chains."

Oh! merry piping time of Christmas! Never let us permit thee to degenerate into distant courtesies and formal salutations. But let us shake our friends and familiars by the hand, as our fathers and their fathers did. Let them all come around us, and let us count how many the year has added to our circle. Let us enjoy the present, and laugh at the past. Let us tell old stories and invent new ones—innocent always, and ingenious if we can. Let us not meet to abuse the world, but to make it better by our individual example. Let us be patriots, but not men of party. Let us look *of the time*,—cheerful and generous, and endeavour to make others as generous and cheerful as ourselves.

GUY FAUX

ON THE PROBABLE EFFECTS OF THE GUNPOWDER TREASON IN THIS COUNTRY IF THE CONSPIRATORS HAD ACCOMPLISHED THEIR OBJECT

A VERY ingenious and subtle writer, whom there is good reason for suspecting to be an Ex-Jesuit, not unknown at Douay some five-and-twenty years since (he will not obtrude himself at M——th again in a hurry), about a twelvemonth back set himself to prove the character of the Powder Plot conspirators to have been that of heroic self-devotedness and true Christian martyrdom. Under the mask of Protestant candour he actually gained admission for his treatise into a London weekly paper, not particularly distinguished for its zeal towards either religion. But, admitting Catholic principles, his arguments are shrewd and incontrovertible. He says—

Guy Faux was a fanatic, but he was no hypocrite. He ranks among *good haters*. He was cruel, bloody-minded, reckless of all considerations but those of an infuriated and bigoted faith; but he was a true son of the Catholic Church, a martyr and a confessor, for all that. He who can prevail upon himself to devote his life for a cause, however we may condemn his opinions or abhor his actions, vouches at least for the honesty of his principles and the disinterestedness of his motives. He may be guilty of the worst practices, but he is capable of the greatest. He is no longer a slave, but free. The contempt of death is the beginning of virtue. The hero of the Gunpowder-Plot was, if you will, a fool, a madman, an assassin; call him what names you please; still he was neither knave nor coward. He did not propose to blow up the Parliament and come off, scot-free, himself; he showed that he valued his own life no more than theirs in such a cause—where the integrity of the Catholic faith and the salvation of perhaps millions of souls was at stake. He did not call it a murder, but a sacrifice which he was about to achieve: he was armed with the Holy Spirit and with fire; he was the Church's chosen servant and her blessed martyr. He comforted himself as "the best of cut-throats." How many wretches are there that would have undertaken to do what he intended for a sum of money, if they could have got off with impunity! How few are there who would have put themselves in Guy Faux's situation to save the universe! Yet in the latter case we affect to be thrown into greater consternation than at the most unredeemed acts of villainy, as if the absolute disinterestedness of the motive doubled the horror of the deed! The cowardice and selfishness of mankind are in fact shocked at the consequences to themselves (if such examples are held up for imitation), and they make a fearful outcry against the violation of every principle of

morality, lest they too should be called on for any such tremendous sacrifices—lest they in their turn should have to go on the forlorn hope of extra-official duty. *Charity begins at home*, is a maxim that prevails as well in the courts of conscience as in those of prudence. We would be thought to shudder at the consequences of crime to others, while we tremble for them to ourselves. We talk of the dark and cowardly assassin; and this is well, when an individual shrinks from the face of an enemy, and purchases his own safety by striking a blow in the dark; but how the charge of cowardly can be applied to the public assassin, who, in the very act of destroying another, lays down his life as the pledge and forfeit of his sincerity and boldness, I am at a loss to devise. There may be barbarous prejudice, rooted hatred, unprincipled treachery, in such an act; but he who resolves to take all the danger and odium upon himself, can no more be branded with cowardice, than Regulus devoting himself for his country, or Codrus leaping into the fiery gulf. A wily Father Inquisitor, coolly and with plenary authority condemning hundreds of helpless, unoffending victims, to the flames or to the horrors of a living tomb, while he himself would not suffer a hair of his head to be hurt, is to me a character without any qualifying trait in it. Again; the Spanish conqueror and hero, the favourite of his monarch, who enticed thirty thousand poor Mexicans into a large open building, under promise of strict faith and cordial good-will, and then set fire to it, making sport of the cries and agonies of these deluded creatures, is an instance of uniting the most hardened cruelty with the most heartless selfishness. His plea was keeping no faith with heretics: this was Guy Faux's too; but I am sure at least that the latter kept faith with himself: he was in earnest in his professions. *His* was not gay, wanton, unfeeling depravity; he did not murder in sport; it was serious work that he had taken in hand. To see this arch-bigot, this heart-whole traitor, this pale miner in the infernal regions, skulking in his retreat with his cloak and dark lanthorn, moving cautiously about among his barrels of gunpowder loaded with death, but not yet ripe for destruction, regardless of the lives of others, and more than indifferent to his own, presents a picture of the strange infatuation of the human understanding, but not of the depravity of the human will, without an equal. There were thousands of pious Papists privy to and ready to applaud the deed when done:—there was no one but our old fifth-of-November friend, who still flutters in rags and straw on the occasion, that had the courage to attempt it. In him stern duty and unshaken faith prevailed over natural frailty.

It is impossible, upon Catholic principles, not to admit the force of this reasoning; we can only not help smiling (with the writer) at the simplicity of the gulled editor, swallowing the dregs of Loyola for the very quintessence of sublimated reason in England at the commencement of the nineteenth century. We will just, as a contrast, show what we Protestants (who are a party concerned) thought upon the same subject, at a period rather nearer to the heroic project in question.

The Gunpowder Treason was the subject which called forth the earliest specimen which is left us of the pulpit eloquence of Jeremy Taylor. When he preached the Sermon on that anniversary, which is printed at the end of the folio edition of his Sermons, he was a young man just commencing his ministry, under the auspices of Archbishop Laud. From the learning, and maturest oratory, which it manifests, one should rather have conjectured it to have proceeded from the same person after he was ripened by time into a Bishop and Father of the Church.—"And, really, these *Romano-barbari* could never pretend to any precedent for an act so barbarous as theirs. Adramelech, indeed, killed a king, but he spared the people; Haman would have killed the people, but spared the king; but that both king and people, princes and judges, branch and rush and root, should die at once (as if Caligula's wish were actuated, and all England upon one head), was never known till now, that all the malice of the world met in this as in a centre. The Sicilian even-song, the matins of St. Bartholomew, known for the pitiless and damned massacres, were but καπνοῦ σκίας ὄναρ, the dream of the shadow of smoke, if compared with this great fire. *In tam occupato sæculo abulas vulgares nequitia non invenit.* This was a busy age; Herostratus must have invented a more sublimed malice than the burning of one temple, or not have been so much as spoke of since the discovery of the powder treason. But I must make more haste, I shall not else climb the sublimity of this impiety. Nero was sometimes the *populare odium,* was popularly hated, and deserved it too, for he slew his master, and his wife, and all his family, once or twice over,—opened his mother's womb,—fired the city, laughed at it, slandered the Christians for it; but yet all these were but *principia malorum,* the very first rudiments of evil. Add, then, to these, Herod's master-piece at Ramah, as it was deciphered by the tears and sad threnes of the matrons in an universal mourning for the loss of their pretty infants; yet this of Herod will prove but an infant wickedness, and that of Nero the evil but of one city. I would willingly have found out an example, but see I cannot; should I put into the scale the extract of all the old tyrants famous in antique stories,—

> Bistonii stabulum regis, Busiridis aras,
> Antiphatæ mensas, et Taurica regna Thoantis;—

should I take for true story the highest cruelty as it was fancied by the most hieroglyphical Egyptian, this alone would weigh

them down, as if the Alps were put in scale against the dust of a balance. For had this accursed treason prospered, we should have had the whole kingdom mourn for the inestimable loss of its chiefest glory, its life, its present joy, and all its very hopes for the future. For such was their destined malice, that they would not only have inflicted so cruel a blow, but have made it incurable, by cutting off our supplies of joy, the whole succession of the Line Royal. Not only the vine itself, but all the *gemmulæ*, and the tender olive branches, should either have been bent to their intentions, and made to grow crooked, or else been broken.

"And now, after such a sublimity of malice, I will not instance in the sacrilegious ruin of the neighbouring temples, which needs must have perished in the flame,—nor in the disturbing the ashes of our intombed kings, devouring their dead ruins like sepulchral dogs,—these are but minutes, in respect of the ruin prepared for the living temples:—

> Stragem sed istam non tulit
> Christus cadentum Principum
> Impune, ne forsan sui
> Patris periret fabrica.
> Ergo quæ poterit lingua retexere
> Laudes, Christe, tuas, qui domitum struis
> Infidum populum cum Duce perfido!"

In such strains of eloquent indignation did Jeremy Taylor's young oratory inveigh against that stupendous attempt, which he truly says had no parallel in ancient or modern times. A century and a half of European crimes has elapsed since he made the assertion, and his position remains in its strength. He wrote near the time in which the nefarious project had like to have been completed. Men's minds still were shuddering from the recentness of the escape. It must have been within his memory, or have been sounded in his ears so young by his parents, that he would seem, in his maturer years, to have remembered it. No wonder then that he describes it in words that burn. But to us, to whom the tradition has come slowly down, and has had time to cool, the story of Guido Vaux sounds rather like a tale, a fable, and an invention, than true history. It supposes such gigantic audacity of daring, combined with such more than infantile stupidity in the motive,—such a combination of the fiend and the monkey,—that credulity is almost swallowed up in contemplating the singularity of the attempt. It has accordingly, in some degree, shared the fate of fiction. It is familiarised to us in a kind of serio-ludicrous

way, like the story of *Guy of Warwick*, or *Valentine and Orson*. The way which we take to perpetuate the memory of this deliverance is well adapted to keep up this fabular notion. Boys go about the streets annually with a beggarly scarecrow dressed up, which is to be burnt, indeed, at night, with holy zeal; but, meantime, they beg a penny for *poor Guy*: this periodical petition, which we have heard from our infancy,—combined with the dress and appearance of the effigy, so well calculated to move compassion,—has the effect of quite removing from our fancy the horrid circumstances of the story which is thus commemorated; and in *poor Guy* vainly should we try to recognise any of the features of that tremendous madman in iniquity, Guido Vaux, with his horrid crew of accomplices, that sought to emulate earthquakes and bursting volcanoes in their more than mortal mischief.

Indeed, the whole ceremony of burning Guy Faux, or *the Pope*, as he is indifferently called, is a sort of *Treason Travestie*, and admirably adapted to lower our feelings upon this memorable subject. The printers of the little duodecimo *Prayer Book*, printed by T. Baskett,[1] in 1749, which has the effigy of his sacred Majesty George II. piously prefixed, have illustrated the service (a very fine one in itself) which is appointed for the Anniversary of this Day, with a print, which it is not very easy to describe, but the contents appear to be these:—The scene is a room, I conjecture in the king's palace. Two persons,—one of whom I take to be James himself, from his wearing his hat while the other stands bare-headed,—are intently surveying a sort of speculum, or magic mirror, which stands upon a pedestal in the midst of the room, in which a little figure of Guy Faux with his dark lantern approaching the door of the Parliament House is made discernible by the light proceeding from a *great eye* which shines in from the topmost corner of the apartment, by which eye the pious artist no doubt meant to designate Providence. On the other side of the mirror, is a figure doing something, which puzzled me when a child, and continues to puzzle me now. The best I can make of it is, that it is a conspirator busy laying the train,—but then, why is he represented in the king's chamber?—Conjecture upon so fantastical a design is

[1] The same, I presume, upon whom the clergyman in the song of the *Vicar and Moses*, not without judgment, passes this memorable censure—

> Here, Moses, the King:—
> 'Tis a scandalous thing
> That this Baskett should print for the Crown.

vain, and I only notice the print as being one of the earliest graphic representations which woke my childhood into wonder, and doubtless combined with the mummery before-mentioned, to take off the edge of that horror which the naked historical mention of Guido's conspiracy could not have failed of exciting.

Now that so many years are past since that abominable machination was happily frustrated, it will not, I hope, be considered a profane sporting with the subject, if we take no very serious survey of the consequences that would have flowed from this plot if it had had a successful issue. The first thing that strikes us, in a selfish point of view, is the material change which it must have produced in the course of the nobility. All the ancient peerage being extinguished, as it was intended, at one blow, the *Red-Book* must have been closed for ever, or a new race of peers must have been created to supply the deficiency; as the first part of this dilemma is a deal too shocking to think of, what a fund of mouth-watering reflections does this give rise to in the breasts of us plebeians of A.D. 1823. Why you or I, reader, might have been Duke of —— or Earl of ——; I particularise no titles, to avoid the least suspicion of intention to usurp the dignities of the two noblemen whom I have in my eye:—but a feeling more dignified than envy sometimes excites a sigh, when I think how the posterity of Guido's Legion of Honour (among whom you or I might have been) might have rolled down "dulcified," as Burke expresses it, "by an exposure to the influence of heaven in a long flow of generations, from the hard, acidulous, metallic tincture of the spring."[1] What new orders of merit, think you, this English Napoleon would have chosen? Knights of the Barrel, or Lords of the Tub, Grand Almoners of the Cellar, or Ministers of Explosion. We should have given the Train *couchant*, and the Fire *rampant* in our arms; we should have quartered the dozen white matches in our coats;—the Shallows would have been nothing to us.

Turning away from these mortifying reflections, let us contemplate its effect upon the *other house*, for they were all to have gone together,—King, Lords, Commons——

To assist our imagination, let us take leave to suppose,—and we do it in the harmless wantonness of fancy,—to suppose that the tremendous explosion had taken place in our days;—we better know what a House of Commons is in our days, and can better estimate our loss;—let us imagine, then, to ourselves,

[1] Letter to a Noble Lord.

the United Members sitting in full conclave above—Faux just ready with his train and matches below; in his hand a "reed tipt with fire"—he applies the fatal engine——

To assist our notions still further, let us suppose some lucky dog of a reporter, who had escaped by miracle upon some plank of St. Stephen's benches, and came plump upon the roof of the adjacent Abbey, from whence descending, at some neighbouring coffee-house, first wiping his clothes and calling for a glass of lemonade, he sits down and reports what he had heard and seen (quorum pars magna fuit) for the *Morning Post* or the *Courier*,—we can scarcely imagine him describing the event in any other words but some such as these:

"A *Motion* was put and carried, That this House do *adjourn*: That the Speaker do *quit the Chair*. The House ROSE amid clamours for Order."

In some such way the event might most technically have been conveyed to the public. But a poetical mind, not content with this dry method of narration, cannot help pursuing the effects of this tremendous blowing up, this adjournment in the air *sine die*. It sees the benches mourn,—the Chair first, and then the benches, and first the Treasury Bench, hurried up in this nitrous explosion; the Members, as it were, pairing off; Whigs and Tories taking their friendly apotheosis together, (as they did their sandwiches below in Bellamy's room). Fancy, in her flight, keeps pace with the aspiring legislators, she sees the awful seat of order mounting till it becomes finally fixed a constellation, next to Cassiopeia's chair,—the wig of him that sat in it taking its place near Berenice's curls. St. Peter, at Heaven's wicket,—no, not St. Peter,—St. Stephen, with open arms, receives his own——

While Fancy beholds these celestial appropriations, Reason, no less pleased, discerns the mighty benefit which so complete a renovation must produce below. Let the most determined foe to corruption, the most thorough-paced redresser of abuses, try to conceive a more absolute purification of the House than this was calculated to produce;—why, Pride's Purge was nothing to it;—the whole borough-mongering system would have been got rid of, fairly *exploded*;—with it, the senseless distinctions of party must have disappeared; faction must have vanished; corruption have expired in air. From Hundred, Tything, and Wapentake, some new Alfred would have convened, in all its purity, the primitive Wittenagemot,—fixed upon a basis of property or population, permanent as the poles——

From this dream of universal restitution, Reason and Fancy with difficulty awake to view the real state of things. But, blessed be Heaven, St. Stephen's walls are yet standing, all her seats firmly secured; nay, some have doubted (since the Septennial Act) whether gunpowder itself, or anything short of a *Committee above stairs*, would be able to shake any one member from his seat;—that great and final improvement to the Abbey, which is all that seems wanting,— the removing Westminster-hall and its appendages, and letting in the view of the Thames,—must not be expected in our days. Dismissing, therefore, all such speculations as mere tales of a tub, it is the duty of every honest Englishman to endeavour, by means less wholesome than Guido's, to ameliorate, without extinguishing, Parliaments; to hold the *lantern* to the dark places of corruption; to apply the *match* to the rotten parts of the system only; and to wrap himself up, not in the muffling mantle of conspiracy, but in the warm, honest *cloak* of integrity and patriotic intention.

ELIA.

LETTER TO AN OLD GENTLEMAN WHOSE EDUCATION HAS BEEN NEGLECTED

MY DEAR SIR,—The question which you have done me the honour to propose to me, through the medium of our common friend Mr. Grierson, I shall endeavour to answer with as much exactness as a limited observation and experience can warrant.

You ask—or rather, Mr. Grierson in his own interesting language asks for you—"Whether a person at the age of sixty-three, with no more proficiency than a tolerable knowledge of most of the characters of the English alphabet at first sight amounts to, by dint of persevering application, and good masters,—a docile and ingenuous disposition on the part of the pupil always pre-supposed—may hope to arrive, within a presumable number of years, at that degree of attainments, which shall entitle the possessor to the character, which you are on so many accounts justly desirous of acquiring, of a *learned man*."

This is fairly and candidly stated—only I could wish that on one point you had been a little more explicit. In the mean time, I will take it for granted, that by a "knowledge of the alphabetic characters," you confine your meaning to the single

powers only, as you are silent on the subject of the diphthongs, and harder combinations.

Why, truly, Sir, when I consider the vast circle of sciences —it is not here worth while to trouble you with the distinction between learning and science—which a man must be understood to have made the tour of in these days, before the world will be willing to concede to him the title which you aspire to, I am almost disposed to reply to your inquiry by a direct answer in the negative.

However, where all cannot be compassed, a great deal that is truly valuable may be accomplished. I am unwilling to throw out any remarks that should have a tendency to damp a hopeful genius; but I must not in fairness conceal from you that you have much to do. The consciousness of difficulty is sometimes a spur to exertion. Rome—or rather, my dear Sir, to borrow an illustration from a place, as yet more familiar to you—Rumford—Rumford—was not built in a day.

Your mind as yet, give me leave to tell you, is in the state of a sheet of white paper. We must not blot or blur it over too hastily. Or, to use an opposite simile, it is like a piece of parchment all be-scrawled and be-scribbled over with characters of no sense or import, which we must carefully erase and remove, before we can make way for the authentic characters or impresses, which are to be substituted in their stead by the corrective hand of science.

Your mind, my dear Sir, again resembles that same parchment, which we will suppose a little hardened by time and disuse. We may apply the characters, but are we sure that the ink will sink?

You are in the condition of a traveller, that has all his journey to begin. And again, you are worse off than the traveller which I have supposed—for you have already lost your way.

You have much to learn, which you have never been taught; and more, I fear, to unlearn, which you have been taught erroneously. You have hitherto, I dare say, imagined, that the sun moves round the earth. When you shall have mastered the true solar system, you will have quite a different theory upon that point, I assure you. I mention but this instance. Your own experience, as knowledge advances, will furnish you with many parallels.

I can scarcely approve of the intention, which Mr. Grierson informs me you had contemplated, of entering yourself at a

common seminary, and working your way up from the lower to the higher forms with the children. I see more to admire in the modesty, than in the expediency, of such a resolution. I own I cannot reconcile myself to the spectacle of a gentleman at your time of life seated, as must be your case at first, below a Tyro of four or five—for at that early age the rudiments of education usually commence in this country. I doubt whether more might not be lost in the point of fitness, than would be gained in the advantages which you propose to yourself by this scheme.

You say, you stand in need of emulation; that this incitement is nowhere to be had but at a public school; that you should be more sensible of your progress by comparing it with the daily progress of those around you. But have you considered the nature of emulation; and how it is sustained at those tender years, which you would have to come in competition with? I am afraid you are dreaming of academic prizes and distinctions. Alas! in the university, for which you are preparing, the highest medal would be a silver penny, and you must graduate in nuts and oranges.

I know that Peter, the great Czar—or Emperor—of Muscovy, submitted himself to the discipline of a dock-yard at Deptford, that he might learn, and convey to his countrymen, the noble art of ship-building. You are old enough to remember him, or at least the talk about him. I call to mind also other great princes, who, to instruct themselves in the theory and practice of war, and set an example of subordination to their subjects, have condescended to enrol themselves as private soldiers; and, passing through the successive ranks of corporal, quartermaster, and the rest, have served their way up to the station, at which most princes are willing enough to set out—of General and Commander-in-Chief over their own forces. But—besides that there is oftentimes great sham and pretence in their show of mock humility—the competition which they stooped to was with their co-evals, however inferior to them in birth. Between ages so very disparate, as those which you contemplate, I fear there can no salutary emulation subsist.

Again, in the other alternative, could you submit to the ordinary reproofs and discipline of a day-school? Could you bear to be corrected for your faults? Or how would it look to see you put to stand, as must be the case sometimes, in a corner?

I am afraid that the idea of a public school in your circumstances must be given up.

PUT TO STAND . . . IN A CORNER

But is it impossible, my dear Sir, to find some person of your own age—if of the other sex, the more agreeable perhaps—whose information, like your own, has rather lagged behind their years, who should be willing to set out from the same point with yourself, to undergo the same tasks—thus at once inciting and sweetening each other's labours in a sort of friendly rivalry? Such a one, I think, it would not be difficult to find in some of the western parts of this island—about Dartmoor for instance.

Or what if, from your own estate—that estate which, unexpectedly acquired so late in life, has inspired into you this generous thirst after knowledge, you were to select some elderly peasant, that might best be spared from the land, to come and begin his education with you, that you might till, as it were, your minds together—one, whose heavier progress might invite, without a fear of discouraging your emulation? We might then see—starting from an equal post—the difference of the clownish and the gentle blood.

A private education then, or such a one as I have been describing, being determined on, we must in the next place look for a preceptor:—for it will be some time before either of you, left to yourselves, will be able to assist the other to any great purpose in his studies.

And now, my dear Sir, if in describing such a tutor as I have imagined for you, I use a style a little above the familiar one in which I have hitherto chosen to address you, the nature of the subject must be my apology. *Difficile est de scientiis inscienter loqui*, which is as much as to say that "in treating of scientific matters it is difficult to avoid the use of scientific terms." But I shall endeavour to be as plain as possible. I am not going to present you with the *ideal* of a pedagogue, as it may exist in my fancy, or has possibly been realised in the persons of Buchanan and Busby. Something less than perfection will serve our turn. The scheme which I propose in this first or introductory letter, has reference to the first four or five years of your education only; and in enumerating the qualifications of him that should undertake the direction of your studies, I shall rather point out the *minimum*, or *least*, that I shall require of him, than trouble you in the search of attainments neither common nor necessary to our immediate purpose.

He should be a man of deep and extensive knowledge. So much at least is indispensable. Something older than yourself, I could wish him, because years add reverence.

To his age and great learning, he should be blest with a temper and a patience, willing to accommodate itself to the imperfections of the slowest and meanest capacities. Such a one in former days Mr. Hartlib appears to have been, and such in our days I take Mr. Grierson to be; but our friend, you know, unhappily has other engagements. I do not demand a consummate grammarian; but he must be a thorough master of vernacular orthography, with an insight into the accentualities and punctualities of modern Saxon, or English. He must be competently instructed (or how shall he instruct you?) in the tetralogy, or first four rules, upon which not only arithmetic, but geometry, and the pure mathematics themselves are grounded. I do not require that he should have measured the globe with Cook, or Ortelius, but it is desirable that he should have a general knowledge (I do not mean a very nice or pedantic one) of the great division of the earth into four parts, so as to teach you readily to name the quarters. He must have a genius capable in some degree of soaring to the upper element, to deduce from thence the not much dissimilar computation of the cardinal points, or hinges, upon which those invisible phenomena, which naturalists agree to terms *winds*, do perpetually shift and turn. He must instruct you, in imitation of the old Orphic fragments (the mention of which has possibly escaped you), in numeric and harmonious responses, to deliver the number of solar revolutions, within which each of the twelve periods, into which the *Annus Vulgaris*, or common year, is divided, doth usually complete and terminate itself. The intercalaries, and other subtle problems, he will do well to omit, till riper years, and course of study, shall have rendered you more capable thereof. He must be capable of embracing all history, so as from the countless myriads of individual men, who have peopled this globe of earth —*for it is a globe*—by comparison of their respective births, lives, deaths, fortunes, conduct, prowess, etc., to pronounce, and teach you to pronounce, dogmatically and catechetically, who was the richest, who was the strongest, who was the wisest, who was the meekest man, that ever lived; to the facilitation of which solution, you will readily conceive, a smattering of biography would in no inconsiderable degree conduce. Leaving the dialects of men (in one of which I shall take leave to suppose you by this time at least superficially instituted), you will learn to ascend with him to the contemplation of the unarticulated language, which was before the written tongue; and, with the aid of the elder Phrygian or Æsopic key, to interpret the sounds

by which the animal tribes communicate their minds—evolving moral instruction with delight from the dialogues of cocks, dogs, and foxes. Or marrying theology with verse, from whose mixture a beautiful and healthy offspring may be expected, in your own native accents (but purified) you will keep time together to the profound harpings of the more modern or Wattsian hymnics.

Thus far I have ventured to conduct you to a "hillside, whence you may discern the right path of a virtuous and noble education; laborious indeed at the first ascent, but else so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospects and melodious sounds on every side, that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming." [1]

With best respects to Mr. Grierson, when you see him,

I remain, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

ELIA.

April 1st, 1823.

A VISION OF HORNS

MY thoughts had been engaged last evening in solving the problem, why in all times and places the *horn* has been agreed upon as the symbol, or honourable badge, of married men. Moses's horn, the horn of Ammon, of Amalthea, and a cornucopia of legends besides, came to my recollection, but afforded no satisfactory solution, or rather involved the question in deeper obscurity. Tired with the fruitless chase of inexplicant analogies, I fell asleep, and dreamed in this fashion.

Methought certain scales or films fell from my eyes, which had hitherto hindered these little tokens from being visible. I was somewhere in the Cornhill (as it might be termed) of some Utopia. Busy citizens jostled each other, as they may do in our streets, with care (the care of making a penny) written upon their foreheads; and *something else*, which is rather imagined, than distinctly imaged, upon the brows of my own friends and fellow-townsmen.

In my first surprise I supposed myself gotten into some forest—Arden, to be sure, or Sherwood; but the dresses and deportment, all civic, forbade me to continue in that delusion. Then a scriptural thought crossed me (especially as there were nearly as many Jews as Christians among them), whether it

[1] Milton's Tractate on Education, addressed to Mr. Hartlib.

might not be the Children of Israel going up to besiege Jericho. I was undeceived of both errors by the sight of many faces which were familiar to me. I found myself strangely (as it will happen in dreams) at one and the same time in an unknown country, with known companions. I met old friends, not with new faces, but with their old faces oddly adorned in front, with each man a certain corneous excrescence. Dick Mitis, the little cheesemonger in St. * * * *'s Passage, was the first that saluted me, with his hat off—you know Dick's way to a customer—and, I not being aware of him, he thrust a strange beam into my left eye, which pained and grieved me exceedingly; but, instead of apology, he only grinned and fleered in my face, as much as to say, "It is the custom of the country," and passed on.

I had scarce time to send a civil message to his lady, whom I have always admired as a pattern of a wife,—and do indeed take Dick and her to be a model of conjugal agreement and harmony,—when I felt an ugly smart in my neck, as if something had gored it behind, and turning round, it was my old friend and neighbour, Dulcet, the confectioner, who, meaning to be pleasant, had thrust his protuberance right into my nape, and seemed proud of his power of offending.

Now I was assailed right and left, till in my own defence I was obliged to walk sideling and wary, and look about me, as you guard your eyes in London streets; for the horns thickened, and came at me like the ends of umbrellas poking in one's face.

I soon found that these towns-folk were the civillest best-mannered people in the world, and that if they had offended at all, it was entirely owing to their blindness. They do not know what dangerous weapons they protrude in front, and will stick their best friends in the eye with provoking complacency. Yet the best of it is, they can see the beams on their neighbours' foreheads, if they are as small as motes, but their own beams they can in no wise discern.

There was little Mitis, that I told you I just encountered—he has simply (I speak of him at home in his own shop) the smoothest forehead in his own conceit—he will stand you a quarter of an hour together contemplating the serenity of it in the glass, before he begins to shave himself in a morning—yet you saw what a desperate gash he gave me.

Desiring to be better informed of the ways of this extraordinary people, I applied myself to a fellow of some assurance, who (it appeared) acted as a sort of interpreter to strangers—he was dressed in a military uniform, and strongly resembled

Colonel ——, of the guards;—and "pray, Sir," said I, "have all the inhabitants of your city these troublesome excrescences? I beg pardon; I see you have none. You perhaps are single." "Truly, sir," he replied, with a smile, "for the most part we have, but not all alike. There are some, like Dick, that sport but one tumescence. Their ladies have been tolerably faithful —have confined themselves to a single aberration or so—these we calls Unicorns. Dick, you must know, is my Unicorn. [He spoke this with an air of invincible assurance.] Then we have Bicorns, Tricorns, and so on up to Millecorns. [Here methought I crossed and blessed myself in my dream.] Some again we have—there goes one—you see how happy the rogue looks—how he walks smiling and perking up his face, as if he thought himself the only man. He is not married yet, but on Monday next he leads to the altar the accomplished widow Dacres, relict of our late sheriff."

"I see, Sir," said I, "and observe that he is happily free from the national *goitre* (let me call it), which distinguishes most of your countrymen."

"Look a little more narrowly," said my conductor.

I put on my spectacles; and observing the man a little more diligently, above his forehead I could mark a thousand little twinkling shadows dancing the horn-pipe, little hornlets, and rudiments of horn, of a soft and pappy consistence (for I handled some of them), but which, like coral out of water, my guide informed me would infallibly stiffen and grow rigid within a week or two from the expiration of his bachelorhood.

Then I saw some horns strangely growing out behind, and my interpreter explained these to be married men whose wives had conducted themselves with infinite propriety since the period of their marriage, but were thought to have antedated their good men's titles, by certain liberties they had indulged themselves in, prior to the ceremony. This kind of gentry wore their horns backwards, as has been said, in the fashion of the old pig-tails; and as there was nothing obtrusive or ostentatious in them, nobody took any notice of it.

Some had pretty little budding antlers, like the first essays of a young faun. These, he told me, had wives, whose affairs were in a hopeful way, but not quite brought to a conclusion.

Others had nothing to show, only by certain red angry marks and swellings in their foreheads, which itched the more they kept rubbing and chafing them; it was to be hoped that something was brewing.

I took notice that every one jeered at the rest, only none took notice of the sea-captains; yet these were as well provided with their tokens as the best among them. This kind of people, it seems, taking their wives upon so contingent tenures, their lot was considered as nothing but natural,—so they wore their marks without impeachment, as they might carry their cockades, and nobody respected them a whit the less for it.

I observed, that the more sprouts grew out of a man's head, the less weight they seemed to carry with them; whereas, a single token would now and then appear to give the wearer some uneasiness. This shows that use is a great thing.

Some had their adornings gilt, which needs no explanation; while others, like musicians, went sounding theirs before them—a sort of music which I thought might very well have been spared.

It was pleasant to see some of the citizens encounter between themselves; how they smiled in their sleeves at the shock they received from their neighbour, and none seemed conscious of the shock which their neighbour experienced in return.

Some had great corneous stumps, seemingly torn off and bleeding. These, the interpreter warned me, were husbands who had retaliated upon their wives, and the badge was in equity divided between them.

While I stood discerning of these things, a slight tweak on my cheek unawares, which brought tears into my eyes, introduced to me my friend Placid, between whose lady and a certain male cousin, some idle flirtations I remember to have heard talked of; but that was all. He saw he had somehow hurt me, and asked my pardon with that round unconscious face of his, and looked so tristful and contrite for his no-offence, that I was ashamed for the man's penitence. Yet I protest it was but a scratch. It was the least little hornet of a horn that could be framed. "Shame on the man," I secretly exclaimed, "who could thrust so much as the value of a hair into a brow so unsuspecting and inoffensive. What then must they have to answer for, who plant great, monstrous, timber-like, projecting antlers upon the heads of those whom they call their friends, when a puncture of this atomical tenuity made my eyes to water at this rate. All the pincers at Surgeon's Hall cannot pull out for Placid that little hair."

I was curious to know what became of these frontal excrescences when the husbands died; and my guide informed me that the chemists in their country made a considerable

profit by them, extracting from them certain subtile essences:—and then I remembered, that nothing was so efficacious in my own for restoring swooning matrons, and wives troubled with the vapours, as a strong sniff or two at the composition, appropriately called hartshorn—far beyond *sal volatile*.

Then also I began to understand, why a man, who is the jest of the company, is said to be the butt—as much as to say, such a one butteth with the horn.

I inquired if by no operation these wens were ever extracted; and was told that there was indeed an order of dentists, whom they call canonists in their language, who undertook to restore the forehead to its pristine smoothness; but that ordinarily it was not done without much cost and trouble; and when they succeeded in plucking out the offending part it left a painful void, which could not be filled up; and that many patients who had submitted to the excision, were eager to marry again, to supply with a good second antler the baldness and deformed gap left by the extraction of the former, as men losing their natural hair substitute for it a less becoming periwig.

Some horns I observed beautifully taper, smooth, and (as it were) flowering. These I understand were the portions brought by handsome women to their spouses; and I pitied the rough, homely, unsightly deformities on the brows of others, who had been deceived by plain and ordinary partners. Yet the latter I observed to be by far the most common—the solution of which I leave to the natural philosopher.

One tribute of married men I particularly admired at, who, instead of horns, wore, engrafted on their forehead, a sort of horn-book. "This," quoth my guide, "is the greatest mystery in our country, and well worth an explanation. You must know that all infidelity is not of the senses. We have as well intellectual, as material, wittols. These, whom you see decorated with the Order of the Book—are triflers, who encourage about their wives' presence the society of your men of genius (their good friends, as they call them)—literary disputants, who ten to one out-talk the poor husband, and commit upon the understanding of the woman a violence and estrangement in the end, little less painful than the coarser sort of alienation. Whip me these knaves—[my conductor here expressed himself with a becoming warmth]—whip me them, I say, who with no excuse from the passions, in cold blood seduce the minds, rather than the persons, of their friends' wives; who, for the tickling pleasure of hearing themselves prate,

dehonestate the intellects of married women, dishonouring the husband in what should be his most sensible part. If I must be —— [here he used a plain word] let it be by some honest sinner like myself, and not by one of these gad-flies, these debauchers of the understanding, these flattery-buzzers." He was going on in this manner, and I was getting insensibly pleased with my friend's manner (I had been a little shy of him at first), when the dream suddenly left me, vanishing—as Virgil speaks—through the gate of Horn.

ELIA.

THE ILLUSTRIOUS DEFUNCT[1]

Nought but a blank remains, a dead void space,
A step of life that promised such a race.—DRYDEN.

NAPOLEON has now sent us back from the grave sufficient echoes of his living renown: the twilight of posthumous fame has lingered long enough over the spot where the sun of his glory set; and his name must at length repose in the silence, if not in the darkness of night. In this busy and evanescent scene, other spirits of the age are rapidly snatched away, claiming our undivided sympathies and regrets, until in turn they yield to some newer and more absorbing grief. Another name is now added to the list of the mighty departed, a name whose influence upon the hopes and fears, the fates and fortunes of our countrymen, has rivalled, and perhaps eclipsed that of the defunct "child and champion of Jacobinism," while it is associated with all the sanctions of legitimate government, all the sacred authorities of social order and our most holy religion. We speak of one, indeed, under whose warrant heavy and incessant contributions were imposed upon our fellow-citizens, but who exacted nothing without the signet and sign-manual of most devout Chancellors of the Exchequer. Not to dally longer with the sympathies of our readers, we think it right to premonish them that we are composing an epicedium

[1] Since writing this article, we have been informed that the object of our funeral-oration is not definitely dead, but only moribund. So much the better; we shall have an opportunity of granting the request made to Walter by one of the children in the wood, and "kill him two times." The Abbé de Vertot having a siege to write, and not receiving the materials in time, composed the whole from his invention. Shortly after its completion, the expected documents arrived, when he threw them aside, exclaiming—"You are of no use to me now; I have carried the town."

upon no less distinguished a personage than the Lottery, whose last breath, after many penultimate puffs, has been sobbed forth by sorrowing contractors, as if the world itself were about to be converted into a blank. There is a fashion of eulogy, as well as of vituperation; and though the Lottery stood for some time in the latter predicament, we hesitate not to assert that "*multis ille bonis flebilis occidit.*" Never have we joined in the senseless clamour which condemned the only tax whereto we became voluntary contributors, the only resource which gave the stimulus without the danger or infatuation of gambling, the only alembic which in these plodding days sublimised our imaginations, and filled them with more delicious dreams than ever flitted athwart the sensorium of Alnaschar.

Never can the writer forget when, as a child, he was hoisted upon a servant's shoulder in Guildhall, and looked down upon the installed and solemn pomp of the then drawing Lottery. The two awful cabinets of iron, upon whose massive and mysterious portals, the royal initials were gorgeously emblazoned, as if after having deposited the unfulfilled prophecies within, the King himself had turned the lock and still retained the key in his pocket;—the blue-coat boy, with his naked arm, first converting the invisible wheel, and then diving into the dark recess for a ticket;—the grave and reverend faces of the commissioners eyeing the announced number;—the scribes below calmly committing it to their huge books;—the anxious countenances of the surrounding populace, while the giant figures of Gog and Magog, like presiding deities, looked down with a grim silence upon the whole proceeding,—constituted altogether a scene, which combined with the sudden wealth supposed to be lavished from those inscrutable wheels, was well calculated to impress the imagination of a boy with reverence and amazement. Jupiter, seated between the two fatal urns of good and evil, the blind Goddess with her cornucopia, the Parcæ wielding the distaff, the thread of life, and the abhorred shears, seemed but dim and shadowy abstractions of mythology, when I had gazed upon an assemblage exercising, as I dreamt, a not less eventful power, and all presented to me in palpable and living operation. Reason and experience, ever at their old spiteful work of catching and destroying the bubbles which youth delighted to follow, have indeed dissipated much of this illusion, but my mind so far retained the influence of that early impression, that I have ever since continued to deposit my humble offerings at its shrine whenever the ministers of the Lottery

went forth with type and trumpet to announce its periodical dispensations; and though nothing has been doled out to me from its undiscerning coffers but blanks, or those more vexatious tantalizers of the spirit, denominated small prizes, yet do I hold myself largely indebted to this most generous diffuser of universal happiness. Ingrates that we are! are we to be thankful for no benefits that are not palpable to sense, to recognise no favours that are not of marketable value, to acknowledge no wealth unless it can be counted with the five fingers? If we admit the mind to be the sole depositary of genuine joy, where is the bosom that has not been elevated into a temporary elysium by the magic of the Lottery? Which of us has not converted his ticket, or even his sixteenth share of one, into a nest-egg of Hope, upon which he has sate brooding in the secret roosting-places of his heart, and hatched it into a thousand fantastical apparitions?

What a startling revelation of the passions if all the aspirations engendered by the Lottery could be made manifest! Many an impecuniary epicure has gloated over his locked-up warrant for future wealth, as a means of realising the dream of his namesake in the "Alchemist,"—

> My meat shall all come in in Indian shells,—
> Dishes of agate set in gold, and studded
> With emeralds, sapphires, hyacinths, and rubies;
> The tongues of carps, dormice, and camels' heels
> Boiled i' the spirit of Sol, and dissolved in pearl,
> (Apicius' diet 'gainst the epilepsy;)
> And I will eat these broths with spoons of amber,
> Headed with diamant and carbuncle.—
> My footboy shall eat pheasants, calvered salmons,
> Knots, godwits, lampreys; I myself will have
> The beards of barbels served:—instead of salads
> Oil'd mushrooms, and the swelling unctuous paps
> Of a fat pregnant sow, newly cut off,
> Dress'd with an exquisite and poignant sauce,
> For which I'll say unto my cook—"There's gold,
> Go forth, and be a knight."

Many a doating lover has kissed the scrap of paper whose promissory shower of gold was to give up to him his otherwise unattainable Danaë: Nimrods have transformed the same narrow symbol into a saddle, by which they have been enabled to bestride the backs of peerless hunters; while nymphs have metamorphosed its Protean form into—

> Rings, gaudes, conceits,
> Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats

and all the braveries of dress, to say nothing of the obsequious

NYMPHS HAVE METAMORPHOSED ITS PROTEAN FORM

husband, the two-footman'd carriage, and the opera-box. By the simple charm of this numbered and printed rag, gamesters have, for a time at least, recovered their losses, spendthrifts have cleared off mortgages from their estates, the imprisoned debtor has leapt over his lofty boundary of circumscription and restraint, and revelled in all the joys of liberty and fortune; the cottage walls have swelled out into more goodly proportion than those of Baucis and Philemon; poverty has tasted the luxuries of competence, labour has lolled at ease in a perpetual arm-chair of idleness, sickness has been bribed into banishment, life has been invested with new charms, and death deprived of its former terrors. Nor have the affections been less gratified than the wants, appetites, and ambitions of mankind. By the conjurations of the same potent spell, kindred have lavished anticipated benefits upon one another, and charity upon all. Let it be termed a delusion; a fool's paradise is better than the wise man's Tartarus: be it branded as an Ignis fatuus, it was at least a benevolent one, which instead of beguiling its followers into swamps, caverns, and pitfalls, allured them on with all the blandishments of enchantment to a garden of Eden, an ever-blooming elysium of delight. True, the pleasures it bestowed were evanescent, but which of our joys are permanent? and who so inexperienced as not to know that anticipation is always of higher relish than reality, which strikes a balance both in our sufferings and enjoyments. "The fear of ill exceeds the ill we fear," and fruition, in the same proportion, invariably falls short of hope. "Men are but children of a larger growth," who may amuse themselves for a long time in gazing at the reflection of the moon in the water, but, if they jump in to grasp it, they may grope for ever, and only get the farther from their object. He is the wisest who keeps feeding upon the future, and refrains as long as possible from undeceiving himself, by converting his pleasant speculations into disagreeable certainties.

The true mental epicure always purchased his ticket early, and postponed inquiry into its fate to the last possible moment, during the whole of which intervening period he had an imaginary twenty thousand locked up in his desk,—and was not this well worth all the money? Who would scruple to give twenty pounds interest for even the ideal enjoyment of as many thousands during two or three months? "*Crede quod habes, et habes*," and the usufruct of such a capital is surely not dear at such a price. Some years ago, a gentleman in passing along

Cheapside saw the figures 1069, of which number he was the sole proprietor, flaming on the window of a lottery office as a capital prize. Somewhat flurried by this discovery, not less welcome than unexpected, he resolved to walk round St. Paul's that he might consider in what way to communicate the happy tidings to his wife and family; but, upon repassing the shop, he observed that the number was altered to 10,069, and upon inquiry, had the mortification to learn that his ticket was a blank, and had only been stuck up in the window by a mistake of the clerk. This effectually calmed his agitation, but he always speaks of himself as having once possessed twenty thousand pounds, and maintains that his ten-minutes' walk round St. Paul's was worth ten times the purchase-money of the ticket. A prize thus obtained, has, moreover, this special advantage;—it is beyond the reach of fate, it cannot be squandered, bankruptcy cannot lay siege to it, friends cannot pull it down, nor enemies blow it up; it bears a charmed life, and none of woman born can break its integrity, even by the dissipation of a single fraction. Show me the property in these perilous times that is equally compact and impregnable. We can no longer become enriched for a quarter of an hour; we can no longer succeed in such splendid failures; all our chances of making such a miss have vanished with the last of the Lotteries.

Life will now become a flat, prosaic routine of matter-of-fact, and sleep itself, erst so prolific of numerical configurations and mysterious stimulants to lottery adventure, will be disfurnished of its figures and figments. People will cease to harp upon the one lucky number suggested in a dream, and which forms the exception, while they are scrupulously silent upon the ten thousand falsified dreams which constitute the rule. Morpheus will stifle Cocker with a handful of poppies, and our pillows will be no longer haunted by the book of numbers.

And who, too, shall maintain the art and mystery of puffing, in all its pristine glory, when the lottery professors shall have abandoned its cultivation? They were the first, as they will assuredly be the last, who fully developed the resources of that ingenious art; who cajoled and decoyed the most suspicious and wary reader into a perusal of their advertisements by devices of endless variety and cunning: who baited their lurking schemes with midnight murders, ghost stories, crim-cons, bon-mots, balloons, dreadful catastrophes, and every diversity of joy and sorrow, to catch newspaper-gudgeons. Ought not such talents

to be encouraged? Verily the abolitionists have much to answer for!

And now, having established the felicity of all those who gained imaginary prizes, let us proceed to show that the equally numerous class who were presented with real blanks, have not less reason to consider themselves happy. Most of us have cause to be thankful for that which is bestowed, but we have all, probably, reason to be still more grateful for that which is withheld, and more especially for our being denied the sudden possession of riches. In the Litany, indeed, we call upon the Lord to deliver us "in all time of our wealth"; but how few of us are sincere in deprecating such a calamity! Massinger's Luke, and Ben Jonson's Sir Epicure Mammon, and Pope's Sir Balaam, and our own daily observation, might convince us that the devil "now tempts by making rich, not making poor." We may read in the *Guardian* a circumstantial account of a man who was utterly ruined by gaining a capital prize:—we may recollect what Dr. Johnson said to Garrick, when the latter was making a display of his wealth at Hampton Court,—"Ah, David! David! these are the things that make a death-bed terrible";—we may recall the Scripture declaration, as to the difficulty a rich man finds in entering into the kingdom of Heaven, and combining all these denunciations against opulence, let us heartily congratulate one another upon our lucky escape from the calamity of a twenty or thirty thousand pound prize! The fox in the fable, who accused the unattainable grapes of sourness, was more of a philosopher than we are generally willing to allow. He was an adept in that species of moral alchemy, which turns everything to gold, and converts disappointment itself into a ground of resignation and content. Such we have shown to be the great lesson inculcated by the Lottery when rightly contemplated; and if we might parody M. de Chateaubriand's jingling expression,—"*le Roi est mort: vive le Roi*," we should be tempted to exclaim, "The Lottery is no more—long live the Lottery!"

UNITARIAN PROTESTS

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND OF THAT PERSUASION NEWLY MARRIED

Dear M——, Though none of your acquaintance can with greater sincerity congratulate you upon this happy conjuncture than myself, one of the oldest of them, it was with pain I found you, after the ceremony, depositing in the vestry-room what is called a Protest. I thought you superior to this little sophistry. What, after submitting to the service of the Church of England —after consenting to receive a boon from her, in the person of your amiable consort—was it consistent with sense, or common good manners, to turn round upon her, and flatly taunt her with false worship? This language is a little of the strongest in your books and from your pulpits, though there it may well enough be excused from religious zeal and the native warmth of nonconformity. But at the altar—the Church of England altar—adopting her forms and complying with her requisitions to the letter—to be consistent, together with the practice, I fear, you must drop the language of dissent. You are no longer sturdy Non Cons; you are there Occasional Conformists. You submit to accept the privileges communicated by a form of words, exceptionable, and perhaps justly, in your view; but, so submitting, you have no right to quarrel with the ritual which you have just condescended to owe an obligation to. They do not force you into their churches. You come voluntarily, knowing the terms. You marry in the name of the Trinity. There is no evading this by pretending that you take the formula with your own interpretation (and so long as you can do this, where is the necessity of Protesting?): for the meaning of a vow is to be settled by the sense of the imposer, not by any forced construction of the taker: else might all vows, and oaths, too, be eluded with impunity. You marry then essentially as Trinitarians; and the altar no sooner satisfied than, hey presto, with the celerity of a juggler, you shift habits, and proceed pure Unitarians again in the vestry. You cheat the Church out of a wife, and go home smiling in your sleeves that you have so cunningly despoiled the Egyptians. In plain English, the Church has married you in the name of so and so, assuming that you took the words in her sense, but you outwitted her; you assented to them in your sense only, and took from her what, upon a right understanding, she would have declined giving you.

This is the fair construction to be put upon all Unitarian

marriages as at present contracted; and so long as you Unitarians could salve your consciences with the equivoque, I do not see why the Established Church should have troubled herself at all about the matter. But the Protesters necessarily see further. They have some glimmerings of the deception; they apprehend a flaw somewhere; they would fain be honest, and yet they must marry notwithstanding; for honesty's sake, they are fain to dehonestate themselves a little. Let me try the very words of your own Protest, to see what confessions we can pick out of them.

"As Unitarians therefore we (you and your newly espoused bride) most solemnly protest against the service (which yourselves have just demanded) because we are thereby called upon, not only tacitly to acquiesce, but to profess a belief in a doctrine which is a dogma, as we believe, totally unfounded." But do you profess that belief during the ceremony; or are you only called upon for the profession but do not make it? If the latter, then you fall in with the rest of your more consistent brethren, who waive the Protest; if the former, then, I fear, your Protest cannot save you.

Hard and grievous it is, that in any case an institution so broad and general as the union of man and wife should be so cramped and straitened by the hands of an imposing hierarchy, that to plight troth to a lovely woman a man must be necessitated to compromise his truth and faith to Heaven; but so it must be, so long as you chuse to marry by the forms of the Church over which that hierarchy presides.

Therefore, say you, we Protest. O poor and much-fallen word Protest! It was not so that the first heroic reformers protested. They departed out of Babylon once for good and all; they came not back for an occasional contact with her altars; a dallying, and then a protesting against dalliance; they stood not shuffling in the porch, with a Popish foot within, and its lame Lutheran fellow without, halting betwixt. These were the true Protestants. You are—Protesters.

Besides the inconsistency of this proceeding, I must think it a piece of impertinence—unseasonable at least, and out of place, to obtrude these papers upon the officiating clergyman—to offer to a public functionary an instrument which by the tenor of his function he is not obliged to accept, but, rather, he is called upon to reject. Is it done in his clerical capacity? he has no power of redressing the grievance. It is to take the benefit of his ministry and then insult him. If in his capacity

of fellow Christian only, what are your scruples to him, so long as you yourselves are able to get over them, and do get over them by the very fact of coming to require his services? The thing you call a Protest might with just as good a reason be presented to the churchwarden for the time being, to the parish clerk, or the pew opener.

The Parliament alone can redress your grievance, if any. Yet I see not how with any grace your people can petition for relief, so long as, by the very fact of your coming to Church to be married, they do *bonâ fide* and strictly relieve themselves. The Upper House, in particular, is not unused to these same things called Protests, among themselves. But how would this honourable body stare to find a noble Lord conceding a measure, and in the next breath, by a solemn Protest disowning it. A Protest there is a reason given for non-compliance, not a subterfuge for an equivocal occasional compliance. It was reasonable in the primitive Christians to avert from their persons, by whatever lawful means, the compulsory eating of meats which had been offered unto idols. I dare say the Roman Prefects and Exarchats had plenty of petitioning in their days. But what would a Festus, or Agrippa, have replied to a petition to that effect, presented to him by some evasive Laodicean, with the very meat between his teeth, which he had been chewing voluntarily rather than abide the penalty? Relief for tender consciences means nothing, where the conscience has previously relieved itself; that is, has complied with the injunctions which it seeks preposterously to be rid of. Relief for conscience there is properly none, but what by better information makes an act appear innocent and lawful, with which the previous conscience was not satisfied to comply. All else is but relief from penalties, from scandal incurred by a complying practice, where the conscience itself is not fully satisfied.

But, say you, we have hard measure; the Quakers are indulged with the liberty denied to us. They have; and dearly have they earned it. You have come in (as a sect at least) in the cool of the evening; at the eleventh hour. The Quaker character was hardened in the fires of persecution in the seventeenth century; not quite to the stake and faggot, but little short of that, they grew up and thrived against noisome prisons, cruel beatings, whippings, stockings. They have since endured a century or two of scoffs, contempts; they have been a bye-word, and a nay-word; they have stood unmoved: and the consequence

of long conscientious resistance on one part is invariably, in the end, remission on the other. The legislature, that denied you the tolerance, which I do not know that at that time you even asked, gave them the liberty which, without granting, they would have assumed. No penalties could have driven them into the Churches. This is the consequence of entire measures. Had the early Quakers consented to take oaths, leaving a Protest with the clerk of the court against them in the same breath with which they had taken them, do you in your conscience think that they would have been indulged at this day in their exclusive privilege of Affirming? Let your people go on for a century or so, marrying in your own fashion, and I will warrant them before the end of it the legislature will be willing to concede to them more than they at present demand.

Either the institution of marriage depends not for its validity upon hypocritical compliances with the ritual of an alien Church; and then I do not see why you cannot marry among yourselves, as the Quakers, without their indulgence, would have been doing to this day; or does it depend upon such ritual compliance, and then in your Protests you offend against a divine ordinance. I have read in the Essex Street Liturgy a form for the celebration of marriage. Why is this become a dead letter? O! it has never been legalised; that is to say, in the law's eye it is no marriage. But do you take upon you to say, in the view of the gospel it would be none? Would your own people at least look upon a couple so paired, to be none? But the case of dowries, alimonies, inheritances, etc., which depend for their validity upon the ceremonial of the Church by law established —are these nothing? That our children are not legally *Filii Nullius*—is this nothing? I answer, nothing; to the preservation of a good conscience, nothing; to a consistent christianity, less than nothing. Sad worldly thorns they are indeed, and stumbling blocks, well worthy to be set out of the way by a legislature calling itself Christian; but not likely to be removed in a hurry by any shrewd legislators, who perceive that the petitioning complainants have not so much as bruised a shin in the resistance; but, prudently declining the briars and the prickles, nestle quietly down in the smooth two-sided velvet of a Protesting Occasional Conformity.—I am, dear sir,

With much respect, yours, etc.,

ELIA.

MANY FRIENDS

UNFORTUNATE is the lot of that man, who can look round about the wide world, and exclaim with truth, *I have no friend!* Do you know any such lonely sufferer? For mercy sake send him to me. I can afford him plenty. He shall have them good cheap. I have enough and to spare. Truly society is the balm of human life. But you may take a surfeit from sweetest odours administered to satiety. Hear my case, dear *Variorum*, and pity me. I am an elderly gentleman—not old—a sort of middle-aged-gentleman-and-a-half—with a tolerable larder, cellar, etc.; and a most unfortunately easy temper for the callous front of impertinence to try conclusions on. My day times are entirely engrossed by the business of a public office, where I am anything but alone from nine till five. I have forty fellow-clerks about me during those hours; and, though the human face be divine, I protest that so many human faces seen every day do very much diminish the homage I am willing to pay that divinity. It fares with these divine resemblances as with a Polytheism. Multiply the object and you infallibly enfeeble the adoration. "What a piece of work is Man! how excellent in faculty," etc. But a great many men together—a hot huddle of rational creatures—Hamlet himself would have lowered his contemplation a peg or two in my situation. *Tædet me harum quotidianarum formarum.* I go home every day to my late dinner, absolutely famished and face-sick. I am sometimes fortunate enough to go off unaccompanied. The relief is restorative like sleep; but far oftener, alas! some one of my fellows, who lives *my way* (as they call it) does me the sociality of walking with me. He sees me to the door; and now I figure to myself a snug fire-side—comfortable meal—a respiration from the burthen of society—and the blessedness of a single knife and fork. I sit down to my solitary mutton, happy as Adam when a bachelor. I have not swallowed a mouthful, before a startling ring announces the visit of a *friend*. O! for an everlasting muffle upon that appalling instrument of torture! A knock makes me nervous; but a ring is a positive fillip to all the sour passions of my nature:—and yet such is my effeminacy of temperament, I neither tie up the one nor dumbfound the other. But these accursed friends, or fiends, that torment me thus! They come in with a full consciousness of their being unwelcome—with a sort of grin of triumph over your

PLEASANT, EXCELLENT YOUNG WOMEN . . .
BUT THEY WERE TOO TALL.

weakness. My soul sickens within when they enter. I can scarcely articulate a "how d'ye." My digestive powers fail. I have enough to do to maintain them in any healthiness when alone. Eating is a solitary function; you may drink in company. Accordingly the bottle soon succeeds; and such is my infirmity, that the reluctance soon subsides before it. The visitor becomes agreeable. I find a great deal that is good in him; wonder I should have felt such aversion on his first entrance; we get chatty, conversible; insensibly comes midnight; and I am dismissed to the cold bed of celibacy (the only place, alas! where I am suffered to be alone) with the reflection that another day has gone over my head without the possibility of enjoying my own free thoughts in solitude even for a solitary moment. O for a Lodge in some vast wilderness! the den of those Seven Sleepers (conditionally the other six were away)—a *Crusoe* solitude!

What most disturbs me is, that my chief annoyers are mostly young men. Young men, let them think as they please, are no company *singly* for a gentleman of my years. They do mighty well in a mixed society, and where there are females to take them off, as it were. But to have the load of one of them to one's own self for successive hours conversation is unendurable.

There was my old friend Captain Beacham—he died some six years since, bequeathing to my friendship three stout young men, his sons, and seven girls, the tallest in the land. Pleasant, excellent young women they were, and for their sakes I did, and could endure much. But they were too tall. I am superstitious in that respect, and think that to a just friendship, something like proportion in stature as well as mind is desirable. Now I am five feet and a trifle more. Each of these young women rose to six, and one exceeded by two inches. The brothers are proportionably taller. I have sometimes taken the altitude of this friendship; and on a modest computation I may be said to have known at one time a whole furlong of Beachams. But the young women are married off, and dispersed among the provinces. The brothers are left. Nothing is more distasteful than these relics and parings of past friendships—unmeaning records of agreeable hours flown. There are three of them. If they hunted in triples, or even couples, it were something; but by a refinement of persecution, they contrive to come singly; and so spread themselves out into three evenings molestation in a week. Nothing is so distasteful as

the sight of their long legs, couched for continuance upon my fender. They have been mates of Indiamen; and one of them in particular has a story of a shark swallowing a boy in the bay of Calcutta. I wish the shark had swallowed *him*. Nothing can be more useless than their conversation to me, unless it is mine to them. We have no ideas (save of eating and drinking) in common. The shark story has been told till it cannot elicit a spark of attention; but it goes on just as usual. When I try to introduce a point of literature, or common life, the mates gape at me. When I fill a glass, they fill one too. Here is sympathy. And for this poor correspondency of having a gift of swallowing and retaining liquor in common with my fellow-creatures, I am to be tied up to an ungenial intimacy abhorrent from every sentiment, and every sympathy besides. But I cannot break the bond. They are sons of my old friend.

LEPUS.

TOM PRY

MY friend TOM PRY is a kind warm-hearted fellow, with no one failing in the world but an excess of the passion of *Curiosity*. He knows everybody's name, face, and domestic affairs. He scents out a match three months before the parties themselves are quite agreed about it. Like the man in the play, *homo est* and no human interest escapes him. I have sometime wondered how he gets all his information. Mere inquisitiveness would not do his business. Certainly the bodily make has much to do with the character. The auricular organs in my friend Tom do not lie flapping against his head as with common mortals, but they perk up like those of a hare at form. The lowest sound cannot elude him. Every parlour and drawing-room is to him a whispering gallery. His own name, pronounced in the utmost compression of susurration, they say, he catches at a quarter furlong interval. I suspect sometimes that the faculty of hearing with him is analogous to the scent in some animals. He seems hung round with ears, like the pagan emblem of Fame, and to imbibe sounds at every pore. You cannot take a walk of business or pleasure, but you are taxed with it by him next morning, with some shrewd guess at the purpose of it. You dread him as you would an inquisitor, or the ubiquitarian power of the old Secret Tribunal. He is the

bird of the air, who sees the matter. He has lodgings at a corner house, which looks out four ways; and though you go a roundabout way to evade his investigation, you are somehow seen notwithstanding. He sees at multiplied angles. He is a sort of second memory to all his friends, an excellent refresher to a dull or oblivious conscience; for he can repeat to you at any given time all that ever you have done in your life. He should have been a death-bed confessor. His appetite for information is omnivorous. To get at the *name* only of a stranger whom he passes in the street, he counts a God-send; what further he can pick up is a luxury. His friends joke with him about his innocent propensity, but the bent of nature is too deeply burned to be removed with such forks. *Usque recurrit.* I myself in particular had been rallying him pretty sharply one day upon the foible, and it seemed to impress him a little. He asked no more questions that morning. But walking with him in St. James's Park in the evening, we met an old Gentleman unknown to him, who bowed to me. I could see that Tom kept his passion within with great struggles. Silence was observed for ten minutes, and I was congratulating myself on my friend's mastery over this inordinate appetite of knowing every thing, when we had not past the Queen's gate a pace or two, but the fire burnt within him, and he said, as if with indifference, "By the way, who was that friend of yours who bowed to you just now?" He has a place in the Post-office, which I think he chose for the pleasure of reading superscriptions. He is too honourable a man, I am sure, to get clandestinely at the contents of a letter not addressed to him, but the outside he cannot resist. It tickles him. He plays about the flame, as it were; contents himself with a superficial caress, when he can get at nothing more substantial. He has a handsome seal, which he keeps to proffer to such of his friends as have not one in readiness, when they would fold up an epistle; nay, he will seal it for you, and pays himself by discovering the direction. As I have no directionary secrets, I generally humour him with pretending to have left my seal at home (though I carry a rich gold one, which was my grandfather's, always about me), to gratify his harmless inclination. He is the cleverest of sealing a letter of any man I ever knew, and turns out the cleanest impressions. It is a neat but slow operation with him—he has so much more time to drink in the direction. With all this curiosity, he is the finest tempered fellow in the world. You may banter him from morning to night, but never ruffle his

temper. We sometimes raise reports to mislead him, as that such a one is going to be married next month, etc.; but he has an instinct, as I called it before, which prevents his yielding to the imposition. He distinguishes *at hearing* between giddy rumour and steady report. He listens with dignity, and his prying is without credulity.

LEPUS.

TOM PRY'S WIFE

YOU say you were diverted with my description of the "Curious Man." Tom is in some respects an amusing character enough, but then it is by no means uncommon. But what power of words can paint Tom's wife? My pencil faulters while I attempt it. But I am ambitious that the portraits should hang side by side: they may set off one another. Tom's passion for knowledge in the *pursuit* is intense and restless, but when satisfied it sits down and seeks no further. He must know all about every thing, but his desires terminate in mere science. Now as far as the *pure mathematics*, as they are called, transcend the *practical*, so far does Tom's curiosity, to my mind, in elegance and disinterestedness, soar above the craving, gnawing, *mercenary* (if I may so call it) inquisitiveness of his wife.

Mrs. Priscilla Pry must not only know all about your private concerns, but be as deeply concerned herself for them: she will pluck at the very heart of your mystery. She must anatomise and skin you, absolutely lay your feelings bare. Her passions are reducible to two, but those are stronger in her than in any human creature—*pity* and *envy*. I will try to illustrate it. She has intimacy with two families—the Grimstones and the Gubbins's. The former are sadly pinched to live, the latter are in splendid circumstances: the former tenant an obscure third floor in Devereux Court, the latter occupy a stately mansion in May-fair. I have accompanied her to both these domiciles. She will burst into the incommodious lodging of poor Grimstone and his wife at some unseasonable hour, when they are at their meagre dinner, with a "Bless me! what a dark passage you have! I could hardly find my way upstairs! Isn't there a drain somewhere? Well, I like to see you at your *little* bit of mutton!" But her treat is to catch them at a meal of solitary

potatoes. Then does her sympathy burgeon, and bud out into a thousand flowers of rhetorical pity and wonder; and it is trumpeted out afterwards to all her acquaintance, that the poor Grimstones were "making a dinner without flesh yesterday." The word *poor* is her favorite; the word (on my conscience) is endeared to her beyond any monosyllable in the language. Poverty in the tone of her compassion, is somehow doubled; it is emphatically what a dramatist, with some licence, has called *poor poverty*. It is stark-naked indigence, and never in her mind connected with any mitigating circumstances of self-respect and independence in the owner, which give to poverty a dignity. It is an object of pure pity, and nothing else. This is her first way. Change we the scene to May-fair and the Gubbins's. Suppose it a morning call:

"Bless me!—(for she equally blesses herself against want and abundance)—what a style you *do* live in! what elegant curtains! You must have a great income to afford all these things. I wonder you can ever visit such poor folks as we":—with more to the same purpose, which I must cut short, not to be tedious. She pumps all her friends to know the exact income of all her friends. Such a one must have a great salary. Do you think he has as much as eight hundred a year—seven hundred and fifty perhaps? A wag once told her I had fourteen hundred—(Heaven knows we Bank Clerks, though with no reason to complain, in few cases realise that luxury)—and the fury of her wonder, till I undeceived her, nearly worked her spirits to a fever. Now Pry is equally glad to get at his friends' circumstances; but his curiosity is disinterested, as I said, and passionless. No emotions are consequent upon the satisfaction of it. He is a philosopher who loves knowledge for its own sake; she is not content with a *lumen siccum* (dry knowledge, says Bacon, is best); the success of her researches is nothing, but as it feeds the two main springs between which her soul is kept in perpetual conflict—Pity, and Envy.

LEPUS.

REFLECTIONS IN THE PILLORY

[About the year 18—, one R——d, a respectable London merchant (since dead), stood in the pillory for some alleged fraud upon the Revenue. Among his papers were found the following "Reflections," which we have obtained by favour of our friend Elia, who knew him well, and had heard him describe the train of his feelings upon that trying occasion almost in the words of the MS. Elia speaks of him as a man (with the exception of the peccadillo aforesaid) of singular integrity in all his private dealings, possessing great suavity of manner, with a certain turn for humour. As our object is to present human nature under every possible circumstance, we do not think that we shall sully our pages by inserting it.—*Editor.*]

Scene—Opposite the Royal Exchange.
Time—Twelve to One, Noon.

Ketch, my good fellow, you have a neat hand. Prithee, adjust this new collar to my neck gingerly. I am not used to these wooden cravats. There, softly, softly. That seems the exact point between ornament and strangulation. A thought looser on this side. Now it will do. And have a care in turning me, that I present my aspect due vertically. I now face the orient. In a quarter of an hour I shift southward—do you mind?—and so on till I face the east again, travelling with the sun. No half points, I beseech you;—N.N. by W. or any such elaborate niceties. They become the shipman's card, but not this mystery. Now leave me a little to my own reflections.

Bless us, what a company is assembled in honour of me! How grand I stand here! I never before felt so sensibly the effect of solitude in a crowd. I muse in solemn silence upon that vast miscellaneous rabble in the pit there. From my private box I contemplate with mingled pity and wonder the gaping curiosity of those underlings. There are my Whitechapel supporters. Rosemary Lane has emptied herself of the very flower of her citizens to grace my show. Duke's place sits desolate. What is there in my face, that strangers should come so far from the east to gaze upon it? [*Here an egg narrowly misses him.*] That offering was well meant, but not so cleanly executed. By the tricklings, it should not be either myrrh or frankincence. Spare your presents, my friends; I am no-ways mercenary. I desire no missive tokens of your approbation. I am past those valentines. Bestow these coffins of untimely chickens upon mouths that water for them. Comfort your addle spouses with them at home, and stop the mouths of your brawling brats with such Olla Podridas; they have need of them. [*A brick is let fly.*] Discase not, I pray you, nor dismantle your

rent and ragged tenements, to furnish me with architectural decorations, which I can excuse. This fragment might have stopped a flaw against snow comes. [*A coal flies.*] Cinders are dear, gentlemen. This nubbling might have helped the pot boil, when your dirty cuttings from the shambles at three ha'-pence a pound shall stand at a cold simmer. Now, south about, Ketch. I would enjoy australian popularity.

What my friends from over the water! Old benchers—flies of a day—ephemeral Romans—welcome! Doth the sight of me draw souls from limbo? can it dispeople purgatory—ha!

What am I, or what was my father's house, that I should thus be set up a spectacle to gentlemen and others? Why are all faces, like Persians at the sun-rise, bent singly on mine alone? It was wont to be esteemed an ordinary visnomy, a quotidian merely. Doubtless, these assembled myriads discern some traits of nobleness, gentility, breeding, which hitherto have escaped the common observation—some intimations, as it were, of wisdom, valour, piety, and so forth. My sight dazzles; and, if I am not deceived by the too familiar pressure of this strange neckcloth that envelopes it, my countenance gives out lambent glories. For some painter now to take me in the lucky point of expression!—the posture so convenient —the head never shifting, but standing quiescent in a sort of natural frame. But these artizans require a westerly aspect. Ketch, turn me.

Something of St. James's air in these my new friends. How my prospects shift, and brighten! Now if Sir Thomas Lawrence be anywhere in that group, his fortune is made for ever. I think I see some one taking out a crayon. I will compose my whole face to a smile, which yet shall not so predominate, but that gravity and gaiety shall contend as it were—you understand me? I will work up my thoughts to some mild rapture —a gentle enthusiamus—which the artist may transfer in a manner warm to the canvass. I will inwardly apostrophize my tabernacle.

Delectable mansion, hail! House, not made of every wood! Lodging, that pays no rent; airy and commodious; which, owing no window tax, art yet all casement, out of which men have such pleasure in peering and overlooking, that they will sometimes stand an hour together to enjoy thy prospects! Cell, recluse from the vulgar! Quiet retirement from the great Babel, yet affording sufficient glimpses into it! Pulpit, that instructs without note or sermon-book, into which the preacher

is inducted without tenth or first fruit! Throne, unshared and single, that disdainest a Brentford competitor! Honour without co-rival! Or hearest thou rather, magnificent theatre in which the spectator comes to see and to be seen? From thy giddy heights I look down upon the common herd, who stand with eyes upturned as if a winged messenger hovered over them; and mouths open, as if they expected manna. I feel, I feel the true Episcopalian yearnings. Behold in me, my flock, your true overseer! What though I cannot lay hands, because my own are laid, yet I can mutter benedictions. True *otium cum dignitate*? Proud Pisgah eminence! Pinnacle sublime! O Pillory, 'tis thee I sing! Thou younger brother to the gallows, without his rough and Esau palms; that with ineffable contempt surveyest beneath thee the grovelling stocks, which claims presumptuously to be of thy great race. Let that low wood know, that thou art far higher born! Let that domicile for groundling rogues and base earth-kissing varlets envy thy preferment, not seldom fated to be the wanton baiting-house, the temporary retreat of poet and of patriot. Shades of Bastwick and of Prynne hover over thee—Defoe is there, and more greatly daring Shebbeare—from their (little more elevated) stations they look down with recognitions. Ketch, turn me.

I now veer to the north. Open your widest gates, thou proud Exchange of London, that I may look in as proudly! Gresham's wonder, hail! I stand upon a level with all your kings. They, and I, from equal heights, with equal superciliousness, o'er-look the plodding money-hunting tribe below; who, busied in their sordid speculations, scarce elevate their eyes to notice your ancient, or my recent, grandeur. The second Charles smiles on me from three pedestals![1] He closed the Exchequer; I cheated the Excise. Equal our darings, equal be our lot.

Are those the quarters? 'tis their fatal chime. That the ever-winged hours would but stand still! but I must descend, descend from this dream of greatness. Stay, stay, a little while, importunate hour hand. A moment or two, and I shall walk on foot with the undistinguished many. The clock speaks one. I return to common life. Ketch, let me out.

[1] A statue of Charles II. by the elder Cibber, adorns the front of the Exchange. He stands also on high, in the train of his crowned ancestors, in his proper order, *within* that building. But the merchants of London, in a superfœtation of loyalty, have, within a few years, caused to be erected another effigy of him on the ground in the centre of the interior. We do not hear that a fourth is in contemplation.—*Editor.*

That domicile for groundling rogues

THE LAST PEACH

I AM the miserablest man living. Give me counsel, dear Editor. I was bred up in the strictest principles of honesty, and have passed my life in punctual adherence to them. Integrity might be said to be ingrained in our family. Yet I live in constant fear of one day coming to the gallows.

Till the latter end of last Autumn I never experienced these feelings of self-mistrust, which ever since have embittered my existence. From the apprehension of that unfortunate man whose story began to make so great an impression upon the public about that time, I date my horrors. I never can get it out of my head that I shall some time or other commit a forgery, or do some equally vile thing. To make matters worse I am in a banking-house. I sit surrounded with a cluster of bank-notes. These were formerly no more to me than meat to a butcher's dog. They are now as toads and aspics. I feel all day like one situated amidst gins and pitfalls. Sovereigns, which I once took such pleasure in counting out, and scraping up with my little tin shovel (at which I was the most expert in the banking-house), now scald my hands. When I go to sign my name I set down that of another person, or write my own in a counterfeit character. I am beset with temptations without motive. I want no more wealth than I possess. A more contented being than myself, as to money matters, exists not. What should I fear?

When a child I was once let loose, by favour of a nobleman's gardener, into his Lordship's magnificent fruit garden, with full leave to pull the currants and the gooseberries; only I was interdicted from touching the wall fruit. Indeed, at that season (it was the end of Autumn) there was little left. Only on the South wall (can I forget the hot feel of the brick-work?) lingered the one last peach. Now peaches are a fruit which I always had, and still have, an almost utter aversion to. There is something to my palate singularly harsh and repulsive in the flavour of them. I know not by what demon of contradiction inspired, but I was haunted with an irresistible desire to pluck it. Tear myself as often as I would from the spot, I found myself still recurring to it, till, maddening with desire, (desire I cannot call it,) with wilfulness rather — without appetite — against appetite, I may call it—in an evil hour I reached out my hand, and plucked it. Some few raindrops just then fell; the sky

(from a bright day) became overcast; and I was a type of our first parents, after the eating of that fatal fruit. I felt myself naked and ashamed; stripped of my virtue, spiritless. The downy fruit, whose sight rather than savour had tempted me, dropped from my hand, never to be tasted. All the commentators in the world cannot persuade me but that the Hebrew word in the second chapter of Genesis, translated apple, should be rendered peach. Only this way can I reconcile that mysterious story.

Just such a child at thirty am I among the cash and valuables, longing to pluck, without an idea of enjoyment further. I cannot reason myself out of these fears: I dare not laugh at them. I was tenderly and lovingly brought up. What then? Who that in life's entrance has seen the babe F——, from the lap stretching out his little fond mouth to catch the maternal kiss, could have predicted, or as much as imagined, that life's very different exit? The sight of my own fingers torments me; they seem so admirably constructed for—pilfering. Then the jugular vein which I have in common ——; in an emphatic sense may I say with David, I am "fearfully made." All my mirth is poisoned by these unhappy suggestions. If, to dissipate reflection, I hum a tune, it changes to the "Lamentations of a Sinner." My very dreams are tainted. I awake with a shocking feeling of my hand in some pocket.

Advise me, dear Editor, on this painful heart-malady. Tell me, do you feel any thing allied to it in yourself? Do you never feel an itching, as it were—a *dactylomania*—or am I alone? You have my honest confession. My next may appear from Bow-street.

SUSPENSURUS.

A CHARACTER

A DESK at the Bank of England is *primâ facie* not the point in the world that seems best adapted for an insight into the characters of men; yet something may be gleaned from the barrenest soil. There is EGOMET, for instance. By the way, how pleasant it is to string up one's acquaintance thus, in the grumbler's corner of some newspaper, and for them to know nothing at all about it; nay, for them to read their own characters and suspect nothing of the matter. Blessings on the

writer who first made use of Roman names. It is only calling Tomkins—Caius; and Jenkins—Titus; or whipping Hopkins upon the back of Scævola, and you have the pleasure of executing sentence with no pain to the offender. This hanging in effigy is delightful; it evaporates the spleen without souring the blood, and is altogether the most gentlemanly piece of Jack-Ketchery imaginable.

Egomet, then, has been my desk-fellow for thirty years. He is a remarkable species of selfishness. I do not mean that he is attentive to his own gain; I acquit him of that common-place manifestation of the foible. I shoot no such small deer. But his sin is a total absorption of mind in things relating to himself—*his* house—*his* horse—*his* stable—*his* gardener, etc. Nothing that concerns himself can he imagine to be indifferent to you.—He does my sympathy too much honour. The worst is, he takes no sort of interest whatever in *your* horse, house, stable, gardener, etc. If you begin a discourse about your own household economy and small matters, he treats it with the most mortifying indifference. He has discarded all pronouns for the first-personal. His inattention, or rather aversion, to hear, is no more than what is a proper return to a self-important babbler of his own little concerns; but then, if he will not give, why should he expect to receive, a hearing? "There is no reciprocity in this."

There is an egotism of vanity; but his is not that species either. He is not vain of any talent, or indeed properly of any thing he possesses; but his doings and sayings, his little pieces of good or ill-luck, the sickness of his maid, the health of his pony, the question whether he shall ride or walk home to-day to Clapham, the shape of his hat or make of his boot; his poultry, and how many eggs they lay daily—are the never ending topics of his talk. *Your* goose might lay golden eggs without exciting in him a single curiosity to hear about it.

He is alike throughout; his large desk, which abuts on mine —*nimium vicini*, alas! is a vast lumber chest composed of every scrap of most insignificant paper, even to dinner invitation cards, every fragment that has been addressed to him, or in any way has concerned himself. My elbow aches with being perpetually in the way of his sudden jerking of it up, which he does incessantly to hunt for some worthless scrap of the least possible self-reference; this he does without notice, and without ceremony. I should like to make a bonfire of the ungainful mass—but I should not like it either; with it would fall down

at once all the structure of his pride—his fane of Diana, his treasure, his calling, the business he came into the world to do.

I said before, he is not avaricious—not egotistical in the vain sense of the word, either; therefore the term selfishness, or egotism, is improperly applied to his distemper; it is the sin of self-fullness. Neither is himself, properly speaking, an object of his contemplation at all; it is the things which belong or refer to himself. His conversation is one entire soliloquy; or it may be said to resemble Robinson Crusoe's self-colloquies in his island: you are the parrot sitting by. Begin a story, however modest, of your own concerns (something of real interest perhaps), and the little fellow contracts and curls up into his little self immediately, and, with shut ears, sits unmoved, self-centred, as remote from your joys or sorrows as a Pagod or a Lucretian Jupiter.

LEPUS.

A POPULAR FALLACY

THAT A DEFORMED PERSON IS A LORD

AFTER a careful perusal of the most approved works that treat of nobility, and of its origin, in these realms in particular, we are left very much in the dark as to the original patent, in which this branch of it is recognised. Neither Camden in his "Etymologie and Original of Barons," nor Dugdale in his "Baronage of England," nor Selden (a more exact and laborious inquirer than either) in his "Titles of Honour," afford a glimpse of satisfaction upon the subject. There is an heraldic term, indeed, which seems to imply gentility, and the right to coat armour, (but nothing further) in persons thus qualified. But the *sinister bend* is more probably interpreted, by the best writers on this science, of some irregularity of birth, than of bodily conformation. Nobility is either hereditary, or by creation, commonly called patent. Of the former kind the title in question cannot be, seeing that the notion of it is limited to a personal distinction, which does not necessarily follow in the blood. Honours of this nature, as Mr. Anstey very well observes, descend moreover in a *right line*. It must be by patent then, if any thing. But who can show it? How comes it to be dormant? Under what king's reign is it patented? Among the grounds of nobility cited by the learned Mr. Ashmole, after "Services in the Field

or in the Council Chamber," he judiciously sets down "Honours conferred by the sovereign out of mere benevolence, or as favouring one subject rather than another, for some likeness or conformity observed (or but supposed) in him to the royal nature"; and instances the graces showered upon Charles Brandon, who "in his goodly person being thought not a little to favour the port and bearing of the king's own majesty, was by that sovereign, King Henry the Eighth, for some or one of these respects, highly promoted and preferred." Here, if anywhere, we thought we had discovered a clue to our researches. But after a painful investigation of the rolls and records under the reign of Richard the Third, or Richard Crouchback, as he is more usually designated in the chronicles, from a traditionary stoop, or gibbosity in that part,—we do not find that that monarch conferred any such lordships, as are here pretended, upon any subject, or subjects, on a simple plea of "conformity" in that respect to the "royal nature." The posture of affairs in those tumultuous times, preceding the battle of Bosworth, possibly left him at no leisure to attend to such niceties. Further than his reign we have not extended our inquiries; the kings of England who preceded, or followed him, being generally described by historians to have been of straight and clean limbs, the "natural derivative (says Daniel [1]) of high blood, if not its primitive recommendation to such ennoblement, as denoting strength and martial prowess—the qualities set most by in that fighting age." Another motive, which inclines us to scruple the validity of this claim, is the remarkable fact, that none of the persons, in whom the right is supposed to be vested, do ever insist upon it themselves. There is no instance of any of them "suing his patent," as the law-books call it; much less of his having actually stepped up into his proper seat, as, so qualified, we might expect that some of them would have had the spirit to do, in the House of Lords. On the contrary, it seems to be a distinction thrust upon them. "Their title of Lord (says one of their own body, speaking of the common people) I never much valued, and now I entirely despise: and yet they will force it upon me as an honour which they have a right to bestow, and which I have none to refuse." [2] Upon a dispassionate review of the subject, we are disposed to believe that there is no right to the peerage incident to mere bodily configuration; that the title in dispute is merely honorary, and

[1] History of England, *Temporibus Edwardi Primi et sequentibus.*
[2] Hay on Deformity.

depending upon the breath of the common people; which in these realms is so far from the power of conferring nobility, that the ablest constitutionalists have agreed in nothing more unanimously, than in the maxim that the King is the sole fountain of honour.

REMINISCENCES OF JUKE JUDKINS, ESQ., OF BIRMINGHAM

I AM the only son of a considerable brazier in Birmingham, who dying in 1803, left me successor to the business, with no other encumbrance than a sort of rent-charge, which I am enjoined to pay out it, of ninety-three pounds sterling *per annum* to his widow, my mother; and which the improving state of the concern, I bless God, has hitherto enabled me to discharge with punctuality. (I say, I am enjoined to pay the said sum, but not strictly obligated; that is to say, as the will is worded, I believe the law would relieve me from the payment of it; but the wishes of a dying parent should in some sort have the effect of law.) So that though the annual profits of my business, on an average of the last three or four years, would appear to an indifferent observer, who should inspect my shop-books, to amount to the sum of one thousand three hundred and three pounds, odd shillings, the real proceeds in that time have fallen short of that sum to the amount of the aforesaid payment of ninety-three pounds sterling annually.

I was always my father's favourite. He took a delight to the very last in recounting the little sagacious tricks, and innocent artifices, of my childhood. One manifestation thereof I never heard him repeat without tears of joy trickling down his cheeks. It seems that when I quitted the parental roof (Aug. 27, 1788), being then six years and not quite a month old, to proceed to the Free School at Warwick, where my father was a sort of trustee, my mother—as mothers are usually provident on these occasions—had stuffed the pockets of the coach, which was to convey me and six more children of my own growth, that were going to be entered along with me at the same seminary, with a prodigious quantity of gingerbread, which I remember my father said was more than was needed; and so indeed it was, for if I had been to eat it all myself, it would have got stale and mouldy before it had been half spent.

The consideration whereof set me upon my contrivances how I might secure to myself as much of the gingerbread as would keep good for the next two or three days, and yet none of the rest in manner be wasted. I had a little pair of pocket-compasses which I usually carried about me for the purpose of making draughts and measurements, at which I was always very ingenious, of the various engines and mechanical inventions, in which such a town as Birmingham abounded. By the means of these, and a small penknife, which my father had given me, I cut out the one half of the cake, calculating that the remainder would reasonably serve my turn, and subdividing it into many little slices, which were curious to see for the neatness and niceness of their proportion, I sold it out in so many penny-worths to my young companions, as served us all the way to Warwick, which is a distance of some twenty miles from this town; and very merry, I assure you, we made ourselves with it, feasting all the way. By this honest stratagem I put double the prime cost of the gingerbread into my purse, and secured as much as I thought would keep good and moist for my next two or three days' eating. When I told this to my parents on their first visit to me at Warwick, my father (good man) patted me on the cheek, and stroked my head, and seemed as if he could never make enough of me; but my mother unaccountably burst into tears, and said "it was a very niggardly action," or some such expression, and that "she would rather it would please God to take me,"—meaning, God help me, that I should die—"than that she should live to see me grow up a *mean man*"—which shows the difference of parent from parent, and how some mothers are more harsh and intolerant to their children than some fathers; when we might expect quite the contrary. My father, however, loaded me with presents from that time, which made me the envy of my schoolfellows. As I felt this growing disposition in them, I naturally sought to avert it by all the means in my power; and from that time I used to eat my little packages of fruit, and other nice things, in a corner so privately, that I was never found out. Once, I remember, I had a huge apple sent me, of that sort which they call *cats'-heads*. I concealed this all day under my pillow; and at night, but not before I had ascertained that my bedfellow was sound asleep,—which I did by pinching him rather smartly two or three times, which he seemed to perceive no more than a dead person, though once or twice he made a motion as he would turn, which frightened me—I say, when I had made all

sure, I fell to work upon my apple; and though it was as big as an ordinary man's two fists, I made shift to get through it before it was time to get up; and a more delicious feast I never made, —thinking all night what a good parent I had (I mean my father) to send me so many nice things, when the poor lad that lay by me had no parent or friend in the world to send him anything nice; and thinking of his desolate condition, I munched and munched as silently as I could, that I might not set him alonging if he overheard me: and yet for all this considerateness, and attention to other people's feelings, I was never much a favourite with my schoolfellows, which I have often wondered at, seeing that I never defrauded any one of them of the value of a half-penny, or told stories of them to their master, as some little lying boys would do, but was ready to do any of them all the services in my power, that were consistent with my own well doing. I think nobody can be expected to go further than that. But I am detaining my reader too long in recording my juvenile days. It is time that I should go forward to a season when it became natural that I should have some thoughts of marrying, and, as they say, settling in the world. Nevertheless my reflections on what I may call the boyish period of my life may have their use to some readers. It is pleasant to trace the man in the boy; to observe shoots of generosity in those young years, and to watch the progress of liberal sentiments, and what I may call a genteel way of thinking, which is discernible in some children at a very early age, and usually lays the foundation of all that is praiseworthy in the manly character afterwards.

With the warmest inclinations towards that way of life, and a serious conviction of its superior advantages over a single one, it has been the strange infelicity of my lot, never to have entered into the respectable estate of matrimony. Yet I was once very near it. I courted a young woman in my twenty-seventh year —for so early I began to feel symptoms of the tender passion! She was well to do in the world, as they call it; but yet not such a fortune as, all things considered, perhaps I might have pretended to. It was not my own choice altogether; but my mother very strongly pressed me to it. She was always putting it to me, that "I had comings in sufficient, that I need not stand upon a portion." Though the young woman, to do her justice, had considerable expectations, which yet did not quite come up to my mark, as I told you before. She had this saying always in her mouth, that "I had money enough, that it was time I enlarged my housekeeping, and to show a spirit befitting my

circumstances." In short, what with her importunities, and my own desires *in part* co-operating—for, as I said, I was not yet quite twenty-seven—a time when the youthful feelings may be pardoned, if they show a little impetuosity—I resolved, I say, upon all these considerations, to set about the business of courting in right earnest. I was a young man then; and having a spice of romance in my character (as the reader doubtless has observed long ago), such as that sex is apt to be taken with, I had reason in no long time to think my addresses were anything but disagreeable.

Certainly the happiest part of a young man's life is the time when he is going a courting. All the generous impulses are then awake, and he feels a double existence in participating his hopes and wishes with another being. Return yet again for a brief moment, ye visionary views—transient enchantments! ye moonlight rambles with Cleora in the Silent Walk at Vauxhall, (N.B. About a mile from Birmingham, and resembling the gardens of that name near London, only that the price of admission is lower)—when the nightingale has suspended her notes in June to listen to our loving discourses, while the moon was overhead (for we generally used to take our tea at Cleora's mother's before we set out, not so much to save expenses, as to avoid the publicity of a repast in the gardens, coming in much about the time of half-price, as they call it)—ye soft intercommunions of soul, when exchanging mutual vows we prattled of coming felicities! The loving disputes we had under those trees, when this house (planning our future settlement) was rejected, because though cheap it was dull; and the other house was given up, because though agreeably situated it was too high-rented—one was too much in the heart of the town, another was too far from business. These minutiæ will seem impertinent to the aged and the prudent. I write them only to the young. Young lovers, and passionate as being young (such were Cleora and I then), alone can understand me. After some weeks wasted, as I may now call it, in this sort of amorous colloquy, we at length fixed upon the house in the High Street, No. 203, just vacated by the death of Mr. Hutton of this town, for our future residence. I had till that time lived in lodgings (only renting a shop for business) to be near to my mother; near I say, not in the same house with her, for that would have been to introduce confusion into our housekeepings, which it was desirable to keep separate. O, the loving wrangles, the endearing differences, I had with Cleora, before we could

quite make up our minds to the house that was to receive us—I pretending for argument sake that the rent was too high, and she insisting that the taxes were moderate in proportion; and love at last reconciling us in the same choice. I think at that time, moderately speaking, she might have had any thing out of me for asking. I do not, nor shall ever regret, that my character at that time was marked with a tinge of prodigality. Age comes fast enough upon us, and in its good time will prune away all that is inconvenient in these excesses. Perhaps it is right that it should do so. Matters, as I said, were ripening to a conclusion between us, only the house was yet not absolutely taken—some necessary arrangements, which the ardour of my youthful impetuosity could hardly brook at that time (love and youth will be precipitate)—some preliminary arrangements, I say, with the landlord respecting fixtures — very necessary things to be considered in a young man about to settle in the world, though not very accordant with the impatient state of my then passions—some obstacles about the valuation of the fixtures, had hitherto precluded (and I shall always think providentially) my final closes with his offer, when one of those accidents, which, unimportant in themselves, often arise to give a turn to the most serious intentions of our life, intervened, and put an end at once to my projects of wifing and of housekeeping. I was never much given to theatrical entertainments; that is, at no time of my life was I ever what they call a regular play-goer; but on some occasion of a benefit-night, which was expected to be very productive, and indeed turned out so, Cleora expressing a desire to be present, I could do no less than offer, as I did very willingly, to 'squire her and her mother to the pit. At that time it was not customary in our town for tradesfolk, except some of the very topping ones, to sit as they now do in the boxes. At the time appointed I waited upon the ladies, who had brought with them a young man, a distant relation, whom it seems they had invited to be of the party. This a little disconcerted me, as I had about me barely silver enough to pay for our three selves at the door, and did not at first know that their relation had proposed paying for himself. However, to do the young man justice, he not only paid for himself, but for the old lady besides, leaving me only to pay for two, as it were. In our passage to the theatre, the notice of Cleora was attracted to some orange wenches that stood about the doors vending their commodities. She was leaning on my arm, and I could feel her every now and

then giving me a nudge, as it is called, which I afterwards discovered were hints that I should buy some oranges. It seems it is a custom at Birmingham, and perhaps in other places, when a gentleman treats ladies to the play,—especially when a full night is expected, and that the house will be inconveniently warm, to provide them with this kind of fruit, oranges being esteemed for their cooling property. But how could I guess at that, never having treated ladies to a play before, and being as I said, quite a novice at these kind of entertainments? At last she spoke plain out, and begged that I would buy some of "those oranges," pointing to a particular barrow. But when I came to examine the fruit, I did not think the quality of it was answerable to the price. In this way I handled several baskets of them, but something in them all displeased me. Some had thin rinds, and some were plainly over ripe, which is as great a fault as not being ripe enough, and I could not (what they call) make a bargain. While I stood haggling with the women, secretly determining to put off my purchase till I should get within the theatre, where I expected we should have better choice, the young man, the cousin, who it seems had left us without my missing him, came running to us with his pockets stuffed out with oranges, inside and out, as they say. It seems, not liking the look of the barrow-fruit, any more than myself, he had slipped away to an eminent fruiterer's about three doors distant, which I never had the sense to think of, and had laid out a matter of two shillings in some of the best St. Michael's, I think, I ever tasted. What a little hinge, as I said before, the most important affairs in life may turn upon! The mere inadvertence to the fact that there was an eminent fruiterer's within three doors of us, though we had just passed it without the thought once occurring to me, which he had taken advantage of, lost me the affections of my Cleora. From that time she visibly cooled towards me, and her partiality was as visibly transferred to this cousin. I was long unable to account for this change in her behaviour, when one day accidentally discoursing of oranges to my mother alone, she let drop a sort of reproach to me, as if I had offended Cleora by my *nearness*, as she called it, that evening. Even now, when Cleora has been wedded some years to that same officious relation, as I may call him, I can hardly be persuaded that such a trifle could have been the motive to her inconstancy; for could she suppose that I would sacrifice my dearest hopes in her to the paltry sum of two shillings, when I was going to treat her to the play, and

her mother too (an expense of more than four times that amount), if the young man had not interfered to pay for the latter, as I mentioned? But the caprices of the sex are past finding out; and I begin to think my mother was in the right; for doubtless women know women better than we can pretend to know them.

(*Incomplete.*)

REMARKABLE CORRESPONDENT

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EVERY-DAY BOOK

Sir,—I am the youngest of Three hundred and sixty-six brethren—there are no fewer of us—who have the honour, in the words of the good old Song, to call the Sun our Dad. You have done the rest of our family the favour of bestowing an especial compliment upon each member of it individually—I mean, as far as you have gone; for it will take you some time before you can make your bow all round—and I have no reason to think it is your intention to neglect any of us but poor Me. Some you have hung round with flowers; others you have made fine with martyrs' palms and saintly garlands. The most insignificant of us you have sent away pleased with some fitting apologue, or pertinent story. What have I done that you miss me without mark or attribute? What though I make my public appearance seldomer than the rest of my brethren? I thought that angels' visits had been accounted the more precious for their very rarity. Reserve was always looked upon as dignified. I am seen but once, for four times that my brethren obtrude themselves; making their presence cheap and contemptible, in comparison with the state which I keep.

Am I not a Day (when I do come) to all purposes as much as any of them. Decompose me, anatomise me; you will find that I am constituted like the rest. Divide me into twenty-four, and you will find that I cut up into as many goodly hours (or main limbs) as the rest. I too have my arteries and pulses, which are the minutes and the seconds.

It is hard to be dis-familied thus, like Cinderella in her rags and ashes, while her sisters flaunted it about in cherry-coloured ribbons and favors. My brethren forsooth are to be dubbed; one, *Saint* Day; another, *Pope* Day; a third, *Bishop* Day; the least of them is *Squire* Day, or *Mr.* Day, while I am—plain Day. Our house, Sir, is a very ancient one, and the least of

us is too proud to put up with an indignity. What though I am but a younger brother in some sense—for the youngest of my brethren is by some thousand years my senior—yet I bid fair to inherit as long as any of them, while I have the Calendar to show; which, you must understand, is our Title Deeds.

Not content with slurring me over with a bare and naked acknowledgment of my occasional visitation in prose, you have done your best to deprive me of my verse honours. In column 310 of your Book, you quote an antique scroll, leaving out the last couplet, as if on purpose to affront me. "Thirty days hath September"—so you transcribe very faithfully for four lines, and most invidiously suppress the exceptive clause:

> Except in Leap Year, that's the time
> When February's days hath twenty and——

I need not set down the rhyme which should follow; I dare say you know it very well, though you were pleased to leave it out. These indignities demand reparation. While you have time it will be well for you to make the *amende honorable*. Ransack your stories, learned Sir, I pray of you, for some attribute, biographical, anecdotical, or floral, to invest me with. Did nobody die, or nobody flourish—was nobody born—upon any of my periodical visits to this globe? Does the world stand still as often as I vouchsafe to appear? Am I a blank in the Almanac? alms for oblivion? If you don't find a flower at least to grace me with (a Forget-Me-Not would cheer me in my present obscurity), I shall prove the worst Day to you you ever saw in your life: and your Work, instead of the title it now vaunts, must be content (every fourth year at least) to go by the lame appellation of

The Every-Day-but-one-Book.

Yours, as you treat me,

TWENTY-NINTH OF FEBRUARY.

DOG DAYS

"Now Sirius rages"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EVERY-DAY BOOK

SIR,—I am one of those unfortunate creatures, who at this season of the year are exposed to the effects of an illiberal prejudice. Warrants are issued out in form, and whole scores

of us are taken up and executed annually, under an obsolete statute, on what is called suspicion of lunacy. It is very hard that a sober, sensible dog, cannot go quietly through a village about his business, without having his motions watched, or some impertinent fellow observing that there is an "odd look about his eyes." My pulse, for instance, at this present writing, is as temperate as yours, Mr. Editor, and my head as little rambling, but I hardly dare to show my face out of doors for fear of these scrutinizers. If I look up in a stranger's face, he thinks I am going to bite him. If I go with my eyes fixed upon the ground, they say I have got the mopes, which is but a short stage from the disorder. If I wag my tail, I am too lively; if I do not wag it, I am sulky—either of which appearances passes alike for a prognostic. If I pass a dirty puddle without drinking, sentence is infallibly pronounced upon me. I am perfectly swilled with the quantity of ditch-water I am forced to swallow in a day, to clear me from imputations—a worse cruelty than the water ordeal of your old Saxon ancestors. If I snap at a bone, I am furious; if I refuse it, I have got the sullens, and that is a bad symptom. I dare not bark outright, for fear of being adjudged to rave. It was but yesterday, that I indulged in a little innocent *yelp* only, on occasion of a cart-wheel going over my leg, and the populace was up in arms, as if I had betrayed some marks of flightiness in my conversation.

Really our case is one which calls for the interference of the chancellor. He should see, as in cases of other lunatics, that commissions are only issued out against proper objects; and not a whole race be proscribed, because some dreaming Chaldean, two thousand years ago, fancied a canine resemblance in some star or other, that was supposed to predominate over addle brains, with as little justice as Mercury was held to be influential over rogues and swindlers; no compliment I am sure to either star or planet. Pray attend to my complaint, Mr. Editor, and speak a good word for us this hot weather.

Your faithful, though sad dog,

POMPEY.

CAPTAIN STARKEY

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EVERY-DAY BOOK

DEAR SIR,—I read your account of this unfortunate being, and his forlorn piece of self-history,[1] with that smile of half-interest which the Annals of Insignificance excite, till I came to where he says "I was bound apprentice to Mr. William Bird, an eminent writer, and Teacher of languages and Mathematics," etc.—when I started as one does in the recognition of an old acquaintance in a supposed stranger. This, then, was that Starkey of whom I have heard my sister relate so many pleasant anecdotes; and whom, never having seen, I yet seem almost to remember. For nearly fifty years she had lost all sight of him—and behold the gentle Usher of her youth grown into an aged Beggar, dubbed with an opprobrious title, to which he had no pretensions; an object and a May game! To what base purposes may we not return! What may not have been the meek creature's sufferings—what his wanderings—before he finally settled down in the comparative comfort of an old Hospitaller of the Almonry of Newcastle! And is poor Starkey dead?——

I was a scholar of that "eminent writer" that he speaks of; but Starkey had quitted the school about a year before I came to it. Still the odour of his merits had left a fragrancy upon the recollection of the elder pupils. The school-room stands where it did, looking into a discoloured dingy garden in the passage leading from Fetter Lane into Bartlett's Buildings. It is still a School, though the main prop, alas! has fallen so ingloriously; and bears a Latin inscription over the entrance in the Lane, which was unknown in our humbler times. Heaven knows what "languages" were taught in it then; I am sure that neither my Sister nor myself brought any out of it, but a little of our native English. By "mathematics," reader, must be understood, "ciphering." It was in fact a humble day-school, at which reading and writing were taught to us boys in the morning, and the same slender erudition was communicated to the girls, our sisters, etc. in the evening. Now Starkey presided, under Bird, over both establishments. In my time,

[1] "Memoirs of the Life of Benjamin Starkey, late of London, but now an inmate of the Freemen's Hospital in Newcastle. Written by himself. With a portrait of the author, and a facsimile of his handwriting. Printed and sold by William Hall, Great Market, Newcastle." 1818. 12mo, pp. 14.

Mr. Cook, now or lately a respectable Singer and Performer at Drury-lane Theatre, and Nephew to Mr. Bird, had succeeded to him. I well remember Bird. He was a squat, corpulent, middle-sized man, with something of the gentleman about him, and that peculiar mild tone—especially while he was inflicting punishment—which is so much more terrible to children, than the angriest looks and gestures. Whippings were not frequent; but when they took place, the correction was performed in a private room adjoining, where we could only hear the plaints, but saw nothing. This heightened the decorum and the solemnity. But the ordinary chastisement was the bastinado, a stroke or two on the palm with that almost obsolete weapon now—the ferule. A ferule was a sort of flat ruler, widened at the inflicting end into a shape resembling a pear,—but nothing like so sweet—with a delectable hole in the middle, to raise blisters, like a cupping-glass. I have an intense recollection of that disused instrument of torture—and the malignancy, in proportion to the apparent mildness, with which its strokes were applied. The idea of a rod is accompanied with something ludicrous; but by no process can I look back upon this blister-raiser with anything but unmingled horror. — To make him look more formidable—if a pedagogue had need of these heightenings —Bird wore one of those flowered Indian gowns, formerly in use with schoolmasters; the strange figures upon which we used to interpret into hieroglyphics of pain and suffering. But boyish fears apart—Bird I believe was in the main a humane and judicious master.

O, how I remember our legs wedged in to those uncomfortable sloping desks, where we sat elbowing each other—and the injunctions to attain a free hand, unattainable in that position; the first copy I wrote after, with its moral lesson, "Art improves Nature"; the still earlier pot-hooks and the hangers, some traces of which I fear may yet be apparent in this manuscript; the truant looks side-long to the garden, which seemed a mockery of our imprisonment; the prize for best spelling which had almost turned my head, and which to this day I cannot reflect upon without a vanity, which I ought to be ashamed of—our little leaden inkstands, not separately subsisting, but sunk into the desks; the bright, punctually-washed morning fingers, darkening gradually with another and another ink-spot: what a world of little associated circumstances, pains, and pleasures, mingling their quotas of pleasure, arise at the reading of those few simple words—"Mr. William Bird, an eminent Writer

and Teacher of languages and mathematics in Fetter Lane, Holborn!"

Poor Starkey, when young, had that peculiar stamp of old-fashionedness in his face, which makes it impossible for a beholder to predicate any particular age in the object. You can scarce make a guess between seventeen and seven and thirty. This antique cast always seems to promise ill-luck and penury. Yet it seems, he was not always the abject thing he came to. My Sister, who well remembers him, can hardly forgive Mr. Thomas Ranson for making an etching so unlike her idea of him, when he was a youthful teacher at Mr. Bird's school. Old age and poverty—a life-long poverty she thinks, could at no time have so effaced the marks of native gentility, which were once so visible in a face, otherwise strikingly ugly, thin, and care-worn. From her recollections of him, she thinks that he would have wanted bread, before he would have begged or borrowed a half-penny. If any of the girls (she says) who were my school-fellows should be reading, through their aged spectacles, tidings from the dead of their youthful friend Starkey, they will feel a pang, as I do, at having teased his gentle spirit. They were big girls, it seems, too old to attend his instructions with the silence necessary; and however old age, and a long state of beggary, seem to have reduced his writing faculties to a state of imbecility, in those days, his language occasionally rose to the bold and figurative, for when he was in despair to stop their chattering, his ordinary phrase was, "Ladies, if you will not hold your peace, not all the powers in heaven can make you." Once he was missing for a day or two; he had run away. A little old unhappy-looking man brought him back—it was his father—and he did no business in the school that day, but sate moping in a corner, with his hands before his face; and the girls, his tormentors, in pity for his case, for the rest of that day forbore to annoy him. I had been there but a few months (adds she) when Starkey, who was the chief instructor of us girls, communicated to us a profound secret, that the tragedy of "Cato" was shortly to be acted by the elder boys, and that we were to be invited to the representation. That Starkey lent a helping hand in fashioning the actors, she remembers; and but for his unfortunate person, he might have had some distinguished part in the scene to enact; as it was, he had the arduous task of prompter assigned to him, and his feeble voice was heard clear and distinct, repeating the text during the whole performance. She describes her recollection

of the cast of characters even now with a relish. Martia, by the handsome Edgar Hickman, who afterwards went to Africa, and of whom she never afterwards heard tidings,—Lucia, by Master Walker, whose sister was her particular friend; Cato, by John Hunter, a masterly declaimer, but a plain boy, and shorter by the head than his two sons in the scene, etc. In conclusion, Starkey appears to have been one of those mild spirits, which, not originally deficient in understanding, are crushed by penury into dejection and feebleness. He might have proved a useful adjunct, if not an ornament to Society, if Fortune had taken him into a very little fostering, but wanting that, he became a Captain—a by-word—and lived, and died, a broken bulrush.

C. L.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF AN UNFORTUNATE DAY

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EVERY-DAY BOOK

Sir,—I am a poor wronged *Day*. I appeal to you as the general patron of the family of the *Days*. The candour with which you attended to the expostulations of a poor relative of ours—a sort of cousin thrice removed [1]—encourages me to hope that you will listen to the complaint of a *Day* of rather more consequence. I am the *Day*, Sir, upon which it pleased the course of nature that your gracious Sovereign should be born. As such, before his Accession, I was always observed and honoured. But since that happy event, in which naturally none had a greater interest than myself, a flaw has been discovered in my title. My lustre has been eclipsed, and—to use the words of one of your own poets—

I fade into the light of common *day*.

It seems, that about that time, an Impostor crept into Court, who has the effrontery to usurp my honours, and to style herself the *King's-birth-Day*, upon some shallow pretence that, being *St. George's-Day*, she must needs be *King-George's-Day* also. *All-Saints-Day* we have heard of, and *All-Souls-Day*, we are willing to admit; but does it follow that this foolish *Twenty-third of April* must be *All-George's-Day*, and enjoy a monopoly of the whole name, from George of Cappadocia to

[1] Twenty-ninth *Day* of February.

George of Leyden, and from George-a-Green down to George Dyer?

It looks a little oddly that I was discarded not long after the discussions of a set of men and measures, with whom I have nothing in common. I hope no whisperer has insinuated into the ears of Royalty, as if I were anything Whiggishly inclined, when, in my heart, I abhor all these kinds of Revolutions, by which I am sure to be the greatest sufferer.

I wonder my shameless Rival can have the face to let the Tower and Park Guns proclaim so many big thundering fibs as they do, upon her Anniversary—making your Sovereign too to be older than he really is by an hundred and odd *days*, which is no great compliment one would think. Consider if this precedent for ante-dating of Births should become general, what confusion it must make in the Parish Registers; what crowds of young heirs we should have coming of age before they are one-and-twenty, with numberless similar grievances. If these chops and changes are suffered, we shall have *Lord-Mayor's-Day* eating her custard unauthentically in *May*, and *Guy Faux* preposterously blazing twice over in the Dog-*days*.

I humbly submit, that it is not within the prerogatives of Royalty itself, to be born twice over. We have read of the supposititious births of Princes, but where are the evidences of this first Birth? Why are not the nurses in attendance, the midwife, etc. produced?—the silly story has not so much as a Warming-Pan to support it.

My legal advisers, to comfort me, tell me that I have the right on my side; that I am the true Birth-*Day*, and the other *Day* is only kept. But what consolation is this to me, as long as this naughty *kept-creature* keeps me out of my dues and privileges?

Pray take my unfortunate case into your consideration, and see that I am restored to my lawful Rejoicings, Firings, Bon-Firings, Illuminations, etc.

And your Petitioner shall ever pray,

TWELFTH DAY OF AUGUST.

THE ASS

Mr. Collier, in his "Poetical Decameron," (Third Conversation) notices a tract printed in 1595, with the author's initials only, A. B., entitled "The Noblenesse of the Asse; a work rare, learned, and excellent." He has selected the following pretty passage from it: "He (the Ass) refuseth no burthen, he goes whither he is sent without any contradiction. He lifts not his foote against any one; he bytes not; he is no fugitive, nor malicious affected. He doth all things in good sort, and to his liking that hath cause to employ him. If strokes be given him, he cares not for them; and, as our modern poet singeth,

> Thou wouldst (perhaps) he should become thy foe,
> And to that end dost beat him many times:
> He cares not for himselfe, much less thy blow!" [1]

Certainly Nature, foreseeing the cruel usage which this useful servant to man should receive at man's hand, did prudently in furnishing him with a tegument impervious to ordinary stripes. The malice of a child, or a weak hand, can make feeble impressions on him. His back offers no mark to a puny foeman. To a common whip or switch his hide presents an absolute insensibility. You might as well pretend to scourge a school-boy with a tough pair of leather breeches on. His jerkin is well fortified. And therefore the Costermongers, "between the years 1790 and 1800," did more politicly than piously in lifting up a part of his upper garment. I well remember that beastly and bloody custom. I have often longed to see one of those refiners in discipline himself at the cart's tail, with just such a convenient spot laid bare to the tender mercies of the whipster. But since Nature has resumed her rights, it is to be hoped that this patient creature does not suffer to extremities; and that, to the savages who still belabour his poor carcass with their blows (considering the sort of anvil they are laid upon) he might in some sort, if he could speak, exclaim with the philosopher, "Lay on: you beat but upon the case of Anaxarchus."

Contemplating this natural safeguard, this fortified exterior, it is with pain I view the sleek, foppish, combed and curried, person of this animal, as he is disnaturalised at Watering

[1] Who this modern poet was, says Mr. C., is a secret worth discovering. —The wood-cut on the title of the Pamphlet is—an Ass with a leaf of laurel round his neck.

BENJAMIN STARKEY

Drawn and etched by S. Ranson.

See p. 133

Places, etc., where they affect to make a palfrey of him. Fie on all such sophistications!—It will never do, Master Groom. Something of his honest shaggy exterior will still peep up in spite of you—his good, rough, native, pine-apple coating. You cannot "refine a scorpion into a fish, though you rince it and scour it with ever so cleanly cookery." [1]

The modern poet quoted by A. B., proceeds to celebrate a virtue for which no one to this day had been aware that the Ass was remarkable.

> One other gift this beast hath as his owne,
> Wherewith the rest could not be furnishèd;
> On man himselfe the same was not bestowne,
> To wit—on him is ne'er engenderèd
> The hatefull vermine that doth teare the skin,
> And to the bode [body] doth make his passage in.

And truly when one thinks on the suit of impenetrable armour with which Nature (like Vulcan to another Achilles) has provided him, these subtle enemies to *our* repose would have shown some dexterity in getting into *his* quarters. As the bogs of Ireland by tradition expel toads and reptiles, he may well defy these small deer in his fastnesses. It seems the latter had not arrived at the exquisite policy adopted by the human vermin "between 1790 and 1800."

But the most singular and delightful gift of the Ass, according to the writer of this pamphlet, is his *voice*; the "goodly, sweet, and continual brayings" of which, "whereof they forme a melodious and proportionable kinde of musicke," seem to have affected him with no ordinary pleasure. "Nor thinke I," he adds, "that any of our immoderne musitians can deny, but that their song is full of exceeding pleasure to be heard; because therein is to be discerned both concord, discord, singing in the meane, the beginning to sing in large compasse, then following into rise and fall, the halfe note, whole note, musicke of five voices, firme singing by four voices, three together or one voice and a halfe. Then their variable contrarieties amongst them, when one delivers forth a long tenor, or a short, the pausing for time, breathing in measure, breaking the minim or very least moment of time. Last of all to heare the musicke of five or six voices chaunged to so many of Asses is amongst them to heare a song of world without end."

There is no accounting for ears; or for that laudable enthusiasm with which an Author is tempted to invest a favourite subject

[1] Milton: *from memory*.

with the most incompatible perfections. I should otherwise, for my own taste, have been inclined rather to have given a place to these extraordinary musicians at that banquet of nothing-less-than-sweet-sounds, imagined by old Jeremy Collier, (Essays, 1698, part 2, on Music,) where, after describing the inspiriting effects of martial music in a battle, he hazards an ingenious conjecture, whether a sort of *Anti-music* might not be invented, which should have quite the contrary effect of "sinking the spirits, shaking the nerves, curdling the blood, and inspiring despair and cowardice and consternation. 'Tis probable," he says, "the roaring of lions, the warbling of cats and screech-owls, together with a mixture of the howling of dogs, judiciously imitated and compounded, might go a great way in this invention." The dose, we confess, is pretty potent, and skilfully enough prepared. But what shall we say to the Ass of Silenus (quoted by Tims), who, if we may trust to classic lore, by his own proper sounds, without thanks to cat or screech-owl, dismaied and put to rout a whole army of giants? Here was *Anti-music* with a vengeance; a whole *Pan-Dis-Harmonicon* in a single lungs of leather!

But I keep you trifling too long on this Asinine subject. I have already passed the *Pons Asinorum*, and will desist, remembering the old pedantic pun of Jem Boyer, my schoolmaster:

Ass *in præsenti* seldom makes a WISE MAN *in futuro*.

IN RE SQUIRRELS

What is gone with the Cages with the climbing Squirrel and bells to them, which were formerly the indispensable appendage to the outside of a Tinman's shop, and were, in fact, the only Live Signs? One, we believe, still hangs out on Holborn; but they are fast vanishing with the good old modes of our ancestors. They seem to have been superseded by that still more ingenious refinement of modern humanity—the Tread-mill; in which *human* Squirrels still perform a similar round of ceaseless, improgressive clambering, which must be nuts to them.

We almost doubt the fact of the teeth of this creature being so purely orange-coloured as Mr. Urban's correspondent gives out. One of our old poets—and they were pretty sharp observers of nature—describes them as brown. But perhaps

the naturalist referred to meant "of the colour of the Maltese orange," [1] which is rather more obfuscated than your fruit of Seville, or St. Michael's; and may help to reconcile the difference. We cannot speak from observation; but we remember at school getting our fingers into the orangery of one of these little gentry (not having a due caution of the traps set there), and the result proved sourer than lemons. The Author of the Task somewhere speaks of their anger as being "insignificantly fierce," but we found the demonstration of it on this occasion quite as significant as we desired; and have not been disposed since to look any of these "gift horses" in the mouth. Maiden aunts keep these "small deer" as they do parrots, to bite people's fingers, on purpose to give them good advice "not to adventure so near the cage another time." As for their "six quavers divided into three quavers and a dotted crotchet," I suppose, they may go into Jeremy Bentham's next budget of Fallacies, along with the "melodious and proportionable kinds of musicke" recorded in your last number of another highly gifted animal.

THE MONTHS

RUMMAGING over the contents of an old stall at a half *book*, half *old iron shop*, in an alley leading from Wardour-street to Soho-square yesterday, I lit upon a ragged duodecimo, which had been the strange delight of my infancy, and which I had lost sight of for more than forty years:—the "QUEEN-LIKE CLOSET, or RICH CABINET"; written by Hannah Woolly, and printed for R. C. and T. S. 1681; being an abstract of receipts in cookery, confectionery, cosmetics, needlework, morality, and all such branches of what were then considered as female accomplishments. The price demanded was sixpence, which the owner (a little squab duodecimo of a character himself) enforced with the assurance that his "own mother should not have it for a farthing less." On my demurring at this extraordinary assertion, the dirty little vendor re-enforced his

[1] Fletcher in the *Faithful Shepherdess*. The satyr offers to Clorin

——Grapes whose lusty blood
Is the learned poet's good,
Sweeter yet did never crown
The head of Bacchus; nuts more brown
Than the *squirrels'* teeth that crack them.——

assertion with a sort of oath, which seemed more than the occasion demanded: "and now (said he) I have put my soul to it." Pressed by so solemn an asseveration, I could no longer resist a demand which seemed to set me, however unworthy, upon a level with his dearest relations; and depositing a tester, I bore away the tattered prize in triumph. I remembered a gorgeous description of the twelve months of the year, which I thought would be a fine substitute for those poetical descriptions of them which your *Every-Day Book* had nearly exhausted out of Spenser. This will be a treat, thought I, for friend HONE. To memory they seemed no less fantastic and splendid than the other. But, what are the mistakes of childhood!—on reviewing them, they turned out to be only a set of commonplace receipts for working the seasons, months, heathen gods and goddesses, etc., in *samplers*! Yet as an instance of the homely occupations of our great-grandmothers, they may be amusing to some readers: "I have seen," says the notable Hannah Woolly, "such Ridiculous things done in work, as it is an abomination to any Artist to behold. As for example: You may find in some Pieces, *Abraham* and *Sarah*, and many other Persons of Old time, Cloathed as they go now-a-daies, and truly sometimes worse; for they most resemble the Pictures on Ballads. Let all Ingenious Women have regard, that when they work any Image, to represent it aright. First, let it be Drawn well, and then observe the Directions which are given by Knowing Men. I do assure you, I never durst work any Scripture-Story without informing my self from the Ground of it; nor any other Story, or single Person, without informing my self both of the Visage and Habit; As followeth.

"If you work *Jupiter, the Imperial feigned God*, He must have long, Black-Curled hair, a Purple Garment trimmed with Gold, and sitting upon a Golden Throne, with bright yellow Clouds about him."

The Twelve Months of the Year

March. Is drawn in Tawny, with a fierce aspect, a Helmet upon his head, and leaning on a Spade; and a Basket of Garden Seeds in his Left hand, and in his Right hand the Sign of *Aries*; and Winged.

April. A Young Man in Green, with a Garland of Mirtle and Hawthorn-buds; Winged; in one hand Primroses and Violets, in the other the Sign *Taurus*.

May. With a Sweet and lovely Countenance; clad in a Robe

of White and Green, embroidered with several Flowres, upon his Head a garland of all manner of Roses; on the one hand a Nightingale, in the other a Lute. His sign must be *Gemini*.

June. In a Mantle of dark Grass green; upon his Head a garland of Bents, Kings-Cups, and Maidenhair; in his Left hand an Angle, with a box of Cantharides; in his Right, the Sign *Cancer*; and upon his arms a Basket of seasonable Fruits.

July. In a Jacket of light Yellow, eating Cherries; with his Face and Bosom Sun-burnt; on his Head a wreath of Centaury and wild Tyme; a Scythe on his shoulder, and a bottle at his girdle; carrying the Sign *Leo*.

August. A Young Man of fierce and Cholerick aspect, in a Flame-coloured Garment; upon his Head a garland of Wheat and Rye, upon his Arm a Basket of all manner of ripe Fruits, at his Belt a Sickle. His Sign *Virgo*.

September. A merry and chereful Countenance, in a Purple Robe, upon his Head a Wreath of red and white Grapes, in his Left hand a handful of Oats, withal carrying a Horn of Plenty, full of all manner of ripe Fruits; in his Right hand the Sign *Libra*.

October. In a Garment of Yellow and Carnation, upon his head a garland of Oak-leaves with Akorns, in his Right hand the Sign *Scorpio*, in his Left hand a Basket of Medlars, Services, and Chestnuts; and any other Fruits then in Season.

November. In a Garment of Changeable Green and Black, upon his Head a garland of Olives, with the Fruit in his Left hand, Bunches of Parsnips and Turnips in his Right. His Sign *Sagittarius*.

December. A horrid and fearful aspect, clad in Irish-Rags, or coarse Freez girt unto him, upon his Head three or four Night-Caps, and over them a Turkish Turbant; his Nose red, his Mouth and Beard clog'd with Isicles, at his back a bundle of Holly, Ivy, or Mistletoe, holding in fur'd Mittens the Sign of *Capricornus*.

January. Clad all in White, as the Earth looks with the Snow, blowing his nails; in his Left Arm a Bilet, the Sign *Aquarius* standing by his side.

February. Cloathed in a dark Skie-colour, carrying in his Right hand the Sign *Pisces*.

The following receipt, "*To dress up a Chimney very fine for the Summer time, as I have done many, and they have been liked very well*," may not be unprofitable to the housewives of this century.

"First, take a pack-thred, and fasten it even to the inner part of the Chimney, so high as that you can see no higher as you walk up and down the House; you must drive in several Nails to hold up all your work; then get a good store of old green Moss from Trees, and melt an equal proportion of Bees-wax and Rosin together, and while it is hot, dip the wrong ends of the Moss in it, and presently clap it upon your pack-thred, and press it down hard with your hand; you must make hast, else it will cool before you can fasten it, and then it will fall down; do so all around where the pack-thred goes; and the next row you must joyn to that, so that it may seem all in one; thus do till you have finished it down to the bottom: then take some other kind of Moss, of a whitish-colour and stiff, and of several sorts or kinds, and place that upon the other, here and there carelessly, and in some places put a good deal, and some a little; then any kind of fine Snail-shels, in which the Snails are dead, and little Toad stools, which are very old, and look like Velvet, or *any other thing that is old and pretty*; place it here and there as your fancy serves, and fasten all with Wax and Rosin. Then for the Hearth of your Chimney, you may lay some Orpan-sprigs in order all over, and it will grow as it lies; and according to the Season, get what flowers you can, and stick in as if they grew, and a few sprigs of Sweet-Bryer: the Flowers you must renew every Week; but the Moss will last all the Summer, till it will be time to make a fire; and the Orpan will last near two Months. A Chimney thus done doth grace a Room exceedingly."

One phrase in the above should particularly recommend it to such of your female readers, as, in the nice language of the day, have done growing some time: "little toad-stools, etc. and any thing that is *old and pretty*." Was ever antiquity so smoothed over? The culinary recipes have nothing remarkable in them, except the costliness of them. Every thing (to the meanest meats) is sopped in claret, steeped in claret, basted with claret, as if claret were as cheap as ditch water. I remember Bacon recommends opening a turf or two in your garden walks, and pouring into each a bottle of claret, to recreate the sense of smelling, being no less grateful than beneficial. We hope the chancellor of the exchequer will attend to this in his next reduction of French wines, that we may once more water our gardens with right Bourdeaux. The medical recipes are as whimsical as they are cruel. Our ancestors were not at all effeminate on this head. Modern sentimentalists would shrink at a cock plucked and bruised in a mortar alive, to make a cullis;

or a live mole baked in an oven (*be sure it be alive*) to make a powder for consumption.—But the whimsicalest of all are the directions to servants—(for this little book is a compendium of all duties,)—the footman is seriously admonished not to stand lolling against his master's chair, while he waits at table; for "to lean on a chair, when they wait, is a particular favour shown to any superior servant, as the chief gentleman, or the waiting woman when she rises from the table." Also he must not "hold the plates before his mouth to be defiled with his breath, nor touch them on the right [inner] side." Surely Swift must have seen this little treatise.

Hannah concludes with the following address, by which the self-estimate which she formed of her usefulness, may be calculated:

Ladies, I hope you're pleas'd, and so shall I,
If what I've writ, you may be gainers by:
If not; it is your fault, it is not mine,
Your benefit in this I do design.
Much labour and much time it hath me cost,
Therefore I beg, let none of it be lost.
The money you shall pay for this my book,
You'll not repent of, when in it you look.
No more at present to you I shall say,
But wish you all the happiness I may.

H. W.

REMINISCENCE OF SIR JEFFERY DUNSTAN

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EVERY-DAY BOOK

To your account of Sir Jeffery Dunstan, in columns 829–30 (where, by an unfortunate Erratum the effigies of *two Sir Jefferys* appear, when the uppermost figure is clearly meant for Sir Harry Dimsdale) you may add, that the writer of this has frequently met him in his latter days, about 1790 or 1791, returning in an evening, after his long day's itineracy, to his domicile—a wretched shed in the most beggarly purlieu of Bethnal Green, a little on this side the Mile-end Turnpike. The lower figure in that leaf most correctly describes his then appearance, except that no graphic art can convey an idea of the general squalor of it, and of his bag (his constant concomitant) in particular. Whether it contained "old wigs" at that time I know not, but it seemed a fitter repository for bones snatched out of kennels, than for any part of a Gentleman's dress even at second hand.

The Ex-member for Garrat was a melancholy instance of a great man whose popularity is worn out. He still carried his sack, but it seemed a part of his identity rather than an implement of his profession; a badge of past grandeur; could any thing have divested him of *that*, he would have shown a "poor forked animal" indeed. My life upon it, it contained no curls at the time I speak of. The most decayed and spiritless remnants of what was once a peruke would have scorned the filthy case; would absolutely have "burst its cearments." No, it was empty, or brought home bones, or a few cinders possibly. A strong odour of burnt bones, I remember, blended with the scent of horse-flesh seething into dog's meat, and only relieved a little by the breathings of a few brick-kilns, made up the atmosphere of the delicate suburban spot, which this great man had chosen for the last scene of his earthly vanities. The cry of "old wigs" had ceased with the possession of any such fripperies; his sack might have contained not unaptly a little mould to scatter upon that grave, to which he was now advancing; but it told of vacancy and desolation. His quips were silent too, and his brain was empty as his sack; he slank along, and seemed to decline popular observation. If a few boys followed him, it seemed rather from habit, than any expectation of fun.

> Alas! how changed from *him*,
> The life of humour, and the soul of whim,
> Gallant and gay on Garrat's hustings proud.

But it is thus that the world rewards its favourites in decay. What faults he had, I know not. I have heard something of a peccadillo or so. But some little deviation from the precise line of rectitude, might have been winked at in so tortuous and stigmatic a frame. Poor Sir Jeffery! it were well if some M.P.'s in earnest have passed their Parliamentary existence with no more offences against integrity than could be laid to thy charge! A fair dismissal was thy due, not so unkind a degradation; some little snug retreat, with a bit of green before thine eyes, and not a burial alive in the fetid beggaries of Bethnal. Thou wouldst have ended thy days in a manner more appropriate to thy pristine dignity, installed in munificent mockery (as in mock honours you had lived)—a Poor Knight of Windsor!

Every distinct place of public speaking demands an oratory peculiar to itself. The forensic fails within the walls of St. Stephen. Sir Jeffery was a living instance of this, for in the flower of his popularity, an attempt was made to bring him out upon the stage (at which of the winter theatres I forget, but I

well remember the anecdote) in the part of *Doctor Last*. The announcement drew a crowded house; but notwithstanding infinite tutoring—by Foote, or Garrick, I forget which—when the curtain drew up, the heart of Sir Jeffery failed, and he faultered on, and made nothing of his part, till the hisses of the house at last in very kindness dismissed him from the boards. Great as his parliamentary eloquence had shown itself, brilliantly as his off-hand sallies had sparkled on a hustings; they here totally failed him. Perhaps he had an aversion to borrowed wit; and, like my Lord Foppington, disdained to entertain himself (or others) with the forced products of another man's brain. Your man of quality is more diverted with the natural sprouts of his own.

OF MAID MARIAN AND ROBIN HOOD

I

The following communication from a "matter-of-fact" correspondent, controverts an old dramatist's authority on an historical point. It should be recollected, however, that poets have large licence, and that few playwrights strictly adhere to facts without injury to poetical character and feeling. The letter is curious, and might suggest an amusing parallel in the manner of Plutarch, between the straight-forward character and the poetical one.

TO THE EDITOR

Sir,—Having been in the country during the publication of the first parts of the Table Book, I have but now just bought them; and on perusing them, I find in Part I., col. 112 infrâ, Mr. C. Lamb's first specimen of the Garrick Plays, called "King John and Matilda"; wherein the said Matilda, the daughter of the *old* baron Fitzwater,[1] is supposed to be poisoned by King John's order, in a nunnery. She is specially entitled therein as "immaculate"—"Virtue's white *virgin*," —and "*maid* and martyr." Now, sir, I presume it to be well-known, that in the best legends extant of the times of Richard I. and John, this identical Matilda, or Maud Fitzwater, is chronicled as the *chère amie* and companion of the outlawed Robert Fitzooth, Earl of Huntingdon, whom as "Robin Hood," she followed as "*Maid* Marian"; and with whom, on his restoration of his honours by King Richard, (to his earldom and estates) she

[1] This is an error of the poet's. His real name was Fitz-Walter, i.e. *the son of Walter*.

intermarried, and became Countess of Huntingdon, and was in *every* respect a wife, though we have no records whether she ever became a mother; and that when by King John the Earl was again outlawed, and driven to the wilds of Sherwood forest, his countess also again shared his misfortunes and a second time took the name of "*Maid* Marian," (then rather a misnomer,) as he did that of "*Robin Hood*."

During the *first* outlawry of Robin Hood, and while Marian, or more properly Matilda, was yet a *maid*, John (then prince John, Richard being in Palestine) made overtures to the old baron Fitzwalter for his daughter as a mistress, and being refused, and finding she was in the society of Robin Hood and his merry men, attacked them, and a bloody fray ensued; during which John and Matilda (in the *male* costume of forest green) met, and fought: John required her to yield, and she as resolutely desired him, in a reproachful taunt, to *win* her first, and so stoutly did she belabour him, as the rest of the foresters did his party also, that he was constrained to yield, and to withdraw from a contest in which nothing was to be got but blows.

We hear nothing more of any attempts of John's to molest her or her party till after the death of Richard, and his own accession to the throne, when he spitefully ousted the Earl and Countess from their honours and possessions, and confiscated all to his own use; and thus this unfortunate pair, as I have above stated, were again constrained to quit the castle for the forest.

But it is certain, that long before John became King, Matilda, alias Maud, alias Marian, had ceased to be a maid; and we have no accounts of any attempts whatsoever made by *King* John upon or against the quondam Matilda Fitzwalter, afterwards alternately Maid Marian and Countess of Huntingdon. Indeed all the legends of Robin Hood's life present "Maid Marian," as having lived with him unmolested by any such attempts during the whole of his *second outlawry*, and as having survived Robin's tragical end; though of *her* subsequent fate they are all silent, expressing themselves indeed ignorant of what was her destiny. Certainly she may then have retired into a nunnery, but at all events not as Matilda Fitzwalter; for she had been legally married and formally acknowledged by Richard I. as Countess of Huntingdon; and as she spent the best part of her fellowship with her husband in Sherwood forest under her romantic forest appellation, it is scarcely probable that she would resume her title on entering into a nunnery.

I would presume, therefore, that however and wherever she ended her days, it must have been under the cognomen of "*Maid* Marian." As her husband lived for some years in the forest after the accession of John, I would think it scarcely likely, that after such a great lapse of time, and after the change had taken place in Matilda both as regards her worldly station and age, and I should presume person (from such a continual exposure to the air and weather,) John should renew any attempt upon her. I should therefore feel exceedingly gratified if either yourself or Mr. C. Lamb could adduce any historical facts to reconcile all the discrepancies, and to show how the facts, as supposed in the play of "King John and Matilda," could, in the natural course of events, and in the very teeth of the declarations made in the history of Robin Hood and his consort, have taken place.

Mark this also;—the historians of Robin Hood and Marian (and their history was written, if not by contemporaries, yet in the next generation; nor is it likely that such a renowned personage should be unnoticed in chronicles for any space of time) all declare that they could not ascertain the fate of Marian after the death of Robin. *His* death and burial are well known, and the inscription to his memory is still extant; but *she* was lost sight of from the time of his decease. How comes it, then, that Robert Davenport, in the seventeenth century, should be so well informed, as to know that Matilda ended her days in a nunnery by poison administered by order of King John, when there is *no tradition extant* of the time and manner of *her* decease? We have no other authority than this of Davenport's tragedy on the subject; and I should, therefore, be inclined to think that he was misinformed, and that the event recorded by him never happened. And as to its being *another* Matilda Fitzwalter, it is highly preposterous to imagine. Is it likely that at the same time there should be two barons of that name and title, each having a daughter named Matilda or Maud? Davenport calls his baron the *old* baron Fitzwalter; and the father of Maid Marian is described as the *old* baron; both must, therefore, have lived in the reign of Richard I., and also in that of John till their death. Indeed, we have proof that the baron was alive in John's reign, because Richard I. having restored him at the same time that he pardoned Fitzooth, *John dispossessed them both* on his accession.

I think it, therefore, highly improbable that there should have been so remarkable a coincidence as *two* barons Fitzwalter, and

two Matildas at the same time, and both the latter subject to the unwelcome addresses of John; consequently I cannot give credence, without *proofs*, to the incident in Davenport's play.—I am, sir, respectfully yours,

"The Veiled Spirit."

May 17th, 1827.

P.S.—Since writing the above, my friend F. C. N. suggests to me, that there was a baron Fitzwalter in John's reign, proprietor of Castle Baynard, whose daughter Matilda John saw at a tourney, and being smitten with her charms, proposed to her father for her as his mistress (precisely the events connected with Maid Marian); and, being refused, he attacked Castle Baynard, and ultimately destroyed it. However, for the reasons I have before stated, I am decidedly of opinion, that if such a baron was proprietor of Castle Baynard, it must have been the father of Maid Marian, as I cannot suppose there were *two*. I cannot precisely remember, nor have I anything to refer to, but I believe it was at a tourney somewhere that *Prince* John first saw *Maud*.

II

Sir,—A correspondent in your last number rather hastily asserts that there is no other authority than Davenport's Tragedy for the poisoning of Matilda by King John. It oddly happens, that in the same number appears an extract from a play of Heywood's, of an older date, in two parts, in which play the fact of such poisoning, as well as her identity with Maid Marian, are equally established. Michael Drayton, also, hath a legend confirmatory (so far as poetical authority can go) of the violent manner of her death. But neither he nor Davenport confounds her with Robin's mistress. Besides the named authorities, old Fuller, I think, somewhere relates, as a matter of chronicle-history, that old Fitzwater (he is called Fitzwater both in Heywood and in Davenport), being banished after his daughter's murder,—some years subsequently, King John, at a tournament in France, being delighted with the valiant bearing of a combatant in the lists, and inquiring his name, was told it was his old servant, the banished Fitzwater, who desired nothing more heartily than to be reconciled to his liege, and an affecting reconciliation followed. In the common collection, called "Robin Hood's Garland" (I have not seen Ritson's), no mention is made, if I remember, of the nobility of Marian. Is

she not the daughter of old Squire Gamwell, of Gamwell Hall? Sorry that I cannot gratify the curiosity of your "disembodied spirit" (who, as such, is, methinks, sufficiently "veiled" from our notice) with more authentic testimonies, I rest,—Your humble Abstracter,

C. L.

MRS. GILPIN'S RIDING TO EDMONTON

Then Mrs. Gilpin sweetly said
Unto her children three,
"I'll clamber o'er this style so high,
And you climb after me."

But having climb'd unto the top,
She could no further go,
But sate, to every passer by
A spectacle and show:

Who said "Your spouse and you this day
Both show your horsemanship,
And if you stay till he comes back,
Your horse will need no whip."

THE sketch, here engraved,[1] (probably from the poet's friend, Romney,) was found with the above three stanzas in the handwriting of Cowper, among the papers of the late Mrs. Unwin. It is to be regretted that no more was found of this little *Episode*, as it evidently was intended to be, to the "Diverting History of Johnny Gilpin." It is to be supposed that Mrs. Gilpin, in the interval between dinner and tea, finding the time to hang upon her hands during her husband's involuntary excursion, rambled out with the children into the fields at the back of the Bell, (as what could be more natural?) and at one of these high aukward styles, for which Edmonton is so proverbially famed, the embarrassment represented, so mortifying to a substantial City madam, might have happened; a predicament, which leaves her in a state, which is the very Antipodes to that of her too loco-motive husband; in fact she rides a restive horse. —Now I talk of Edmonton styles, I must speak a little about those of Enfield, its next neighbour, which are so ingeniously contrived—every rising bar to the top becoming more protuberant than the one under it—that it is impossible for any Christian climber to get over without bruising his (or her) shins as many times as there are bars. These inhospitable invitations to a flayed skin, are planted so thickly too, and are so

[1] In Hone's *Table Book*, vol. ii.

SATURDAY NIGHT

From an engraving by T. Mitchell after the painting by D. Wilkie, R.A.

See p. 154.

and which they are to be sure not to over-brown on the morrow. Nor speak I of the hard-handed Artisan, who on this night receives the pittance which is to furnish the neat Sabbatical dinner—not always reserved with Judaical rigor for that laudable purpose, but broken in upon, perchance, by inviting pot of ale, satisfactory to the present orifice. These are alleviatory, care-consoling. But the Hebdomadal Finale which I contemplate hath neither comfort nor alleviation in it; I pronounce it, from memory, altogether punitive, and to be abhorred. It is —Saturday Night to the School-boy!

Cleanliness, saith some sage man, is next to Godliness. It may be; but how it came to sit so very near, is the marvel. Methinks some of the more human virtues might have put in for a place before it. Justice—Humanity—Temperance—are positive qualities; the courtesies and little civil offices of life, had I been Master of the Ceremonies to that Court, should have sate above the salt in preference to a mere negation. I confess there is something wonderfully refreshing, in warm countries, in the act of ablution. Those Mahometan washings—how cool to the imagination! but in all these superstitions, the action itself, if not the duty, is voluntary. But to be washed perforce; to have a detestable flannel rag soaked in hot water, and redolent of the very coarsest coarse soap, ingrained with hard beads for torment, thrust into your mouth, eyes, nostrils—positively Burking you, under pretence of cleansing—substituting soap for dirt, the worst dirt of the two—making your poor red eyes smart all night, that they may look out brighter on the Sabbath morn, for their clearness was the effect of pain more than cleanliness.—Could this be true religion?

The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. I am always disposed to add, so are those of Grandmothers. *Mine*—the Print has made her look rather too young—had never-failing pretexts of tormenting children for their good. I was a chit then; and I well remember when a fly had got into a corner of my eye, and I was complaining of it to her, the old Lady deliberately pounded two ounces or more of the finest loaf sugar that could be got, and making me hold open the eye as wide as I could—all innocent of her purpose—she blew from delicate white paper, with a full breath, the whole saccharine contents into the part afflicted, saying, "There, now the fly is out." 'Twas most true—a legion of blue-bottles, with the prince of flies at their head, must have dislodged with the torrent and deluge of tears which followed. I kept my own counsel, and

my fly in my eye when I had got one, in future, without troubling her dulcet applications for the remedy. Then her medicine-case was a perfect magazine of tortures for infants. She seemed to have no notion of the comparatively tender drenches which young internals require—her potions were anything but milk for babes. Then her sewing up of a cut finger—pricking a whitloe before it was ripe, because she could not see well,—with the aggravation of the pitying tone she did it in.

But of all her nostrums—rest her soul—nothing came up to the Saturday Night's flannel—that rude fragment of a Witney blanket. Wales spins none so coarse — thrust into the corners of a weak child's eye with soap that might have absterged an Ethiop, whitened the hands of Duncan's She-murderer, and scowered away Original Sin itself. A faint image of my penance you see in the Print—but the Artist has sunk the flannel—the Age, I suppose, is too nice to bear it: and he has faintly shadowed the expostulatory suspension of the razor-strap in the hand of my Grandfather, when my pains and clamours had waxed intolerable. Peace to the Shades of them both! and if their well-meaning souls had need of cleansing when they quitted earth, may the process of it have been milder than that of my old Purgatorial Saturday Night's path to the Sabbatical rest of the morrow!

NEPOS.

THOUGHTS ON PRESENTS OF GAME, ETC.

"We love to have our friend in the country sitting thus at our table *by proxy*; to apprehend his presence (though a hundred miles may be between us) by a turkey, whose goodly aspect reflects to us his 'plump corpusculum'; to taste him in grouse or woodcock; to feel him gliding down in the toast peculiar to the latter; to concorporate him in a slice of Canterbury brawn. This is indeed to have him within ourselves; to know him intimately; such participation is methinks *unitive*, as the old theologians phrase it."—*Last Essays of Elia.*

ELIA presents his acknowledgments to his "Correspondent Unknown," for a basket of prodigiously fine game. He takes for granted that so amiable a character must be a reader of the *Athenæum*. Else he had meditated a notice in *The Times*. Now if this friend had consulted the Delphic oracle for a present suited to the palate of Elia, he could not have hit upon a morsel so acceptable. The birds he is barely thankful for; pheasants are poor *fowls* disguised in fine feathers. But a hare roasted

hard and brown—with gravy and melted butter!—old Mr. Chambers, the sensible clergyman in Warwickshire, whose son's acquaintance has made many hours happy in the life of Elia, used to allow a pound of Epping to every hare. Perhaps that was over-doing it. But, in spite of the note of Philomel, who, like some fine poets, that think no scorn to adopt plagiarisms from an humble brother, reiterates every Spring her cuckoo cry of "Jug, Jug, Jug," Elia pronounces that a hare, to be truly palated, must be roasted. Jugging sophisticates her. In *our* way it eats so "crips," as Mrs. Minikin says. Time was, when Elia was not arrived at his taste, that he preferred to all luxuries a roasted Pig. But he disclaims all such green-sickness appetites in future, though he hath to acknowledge the receipt of many a delicacy in that kind from correspondents—good, but mistaken men—in consequence of their erroneous supposition, that he had carried up into mature life the prepossessions of childhood. From the worthy Vicar of Enfield he acknowledges a tithe contribution of extraordinary sapor. The ancients must have loved hares. Else why adopt the word *lepores* (obviously from *lepus*) but for some subtle analogy between the delicate flavour of the latter, and the finer relishes of wit in what we most poorly translate *pleasantries*. The fine madnesses of the poet are the very decoction of his diet. Thence is he hare-brained. Harum-scarum is a libellous unfounded phrase of modern usage. 'Tis true the hare is the most circumspect of animals, sleeping with her eye open. Her ears, ever erect, keep them in that wholesome exercise, which conduces them to form the very tit-bit of the admirers of this noble animal. Noble will I call her, in spite of her detractors, who from occasional demonstrations of the principle of self-preservation (common to all animals) infer in her a defect of heroism. Half a hundred horsemen with thrice the number of dogs, scour the country in pursuit of puss across three counties; and because the well-flavoured beast, weighing the odds, is willing to evade the hue and cry, with her delicate ears shrinking perchance from discord—comes the grave Naturalist, Linnæus perchance or Buffon, and gravely sets down the Hare as a—timid animal. Why, Achilles, or Bully Dawson, would have declined the preposterous combat.

In fact, how light of digestion we feel after a hare! How tender its processes after swallowing! What chyle it promotes! How etherial! as if its living celerity were a type of its nimble coursing through the animal juices. The notice might be

longer. It is intended less as a Natural History of the Hare, than a cursory thanks to the country "good Unknown." The hare has many friends, but none sincerer than

ELIA.

Nov. 30, 1833.

A CHARACTER OF THE LATE ELIA

BY A FRIEND

THIS gentleman, who for some months past had been in a declining way, hath at length paid his final tribute to nature. He just lived long enough (it was what he wished) to see his papers collected into a volume. The pages of the *London Magazine* will henceforth know him no more.

Exactly at twelve last night his queer spirit departed; and the bells of Saint Bride's rang him out with the old year. The mournful vibrations were caught in the dining room of his friends T. and H.; and the company, assembled there to welcome in another first of January, checked their carousals in mid-mirth, and were silent. Janus wept. The gentle P——r, in a whisper, signifyed his intention of devoting an elegy; and Allan C——, nobly forgetful of his countryman's wrongs, vowed a Memoir to his *manes* full and friendly as a Tale of Lyddal-cross.

To say truth, it is time he were gone. The humour of the thing, if there was ever much in it, was pretty well exhausted; and a two years' and half existence has been a tolerable duration for a phantom.

I am now at liberty to confess, that much which I have heard objected to my late friend's writings was well-founded. Crude they are, I grant you—a sort of unlicked, incondite things—villainously pranked in an affected array of antique modes and phrases. They had not been *his*, if they had been other than such; and better it is, that a writer should be natural in a self-pleasing quaintness, than to affect a naturalness (so-called) that should be strange to him. Egotistical they have been pronounced by some who did not know, that what he tells us, as of himself, was often true only (historically) of another; as in his Fourth Essay (to save many instances) —where under the *first person* (his favourite figure) he shadows forth the forlorn estate of a country-boy placed at a London school, far from his friends and connections—in direct opposition

to his own early history.—If it be egotism to imply and twine with his own identity the griefs and affections of another—making himself many, or reducing many unto himself—then is the skilful novelist, who all along brings in his hero, or heroine, speaking of themselves, the greatest egotist of all; who yet has never, therefore, been accused of that narrowness. And how shall the intenser dramatist escape being faulty, who doubtless, under cover of passion uttered by another, oftentimes gives blameless vent to his most inward feelings, and expresses his own story modestly?

My late friend was in many respects a singular character. Those who did not like him, hated him; and some, who once liked him, afterwards became his bitterest haters. The truth is, he gave himself too little concern about what he uttered, and in whose presence. He observed neither time nor place, and would even out with what came uppermost. With the severe religionist, he would pass for a free-thinker; while the other faction set him down for a bigot, or persuaded themselves that he belied his sentiments. Few understood him; and I am not certain that at all times he quite understood himself. He too much affected that dangerous figure — irony. He sowed doubtful speeches, and reaped plain, unequivocal hatred.—He would interrupt the gravest discussion with some light jest; and yet, perhaps, not quite irrelevant in ears that could understand it. Your long and much talkers hated him. The informal habit of his mind, joined to an inveterate impediment of speech, forbade him to be an orator; and he seemed determined that no one else should play that part when he was present. He was *petit* and ordinary in his person and appearance. I have seen him sometimes in what is called good company, but where he has been a stranger, sit silent, and be suspected for an odd fellow; till some unlucky occasion provoking it, he would stutter out some senseless pun (not altogether senseless perhaps, if rightly taken), which has stamped his character for the evening. It was hit or miss with him; but nine times out of ten, he contrived by this device to send away a whole company his enemies. His conceptions rose kindlier than his utterance, and his happiest *impromptus* had the appearance of effort. He has been accused of trying to be witty, when in truth he was but struggling to give his poor thoughts articulation. He chose his companions for some individuality of character which they manifested.—Hence, not many persons of science, and few professed *literati*, were of his councils. They were, for the most

part, persons of an uncertain fortune; and, as to such people commonly nothing is more obnoxious than a gentleman of settled (though moderate) income, he passed with most of them for a great miser. To my knowledge this was a mistake. His *intimados*, to confess a truth, were in the world's eye a ragged regiment. He found them floating on the surface of society; and the colour, or something else, in the weed pleased him. The burrs stuck to him—but they were good and loving burrs for all that. He never greatly cared for the society of what are called good people. If any of these were scandalised (and offences were sure to arise), he could not help it. When he had been remonstrated with for not making more concessions to the feelings of good people, he would retort by asking, What one point did these good people ever concede to him? He was temperate in his meals and diversions, but always kept a little on this side of abstemiousness. Only in the use of the Indian weed he might be thought a little excessive. He took it, he would say, as a solvent of speech. Marry—as the friendly vapour ascended, how his prattle would curl up sometimes with it! the ligaments, which tongue-tied him, were loosened, and the stammerer proceeded a statist!

I do not know whether I ought to bemoan or rejoice that my old friend is departed. His jests were beginning to grow obsolete, and his stories to be found out. He felt the approaches of age; and, while he pretended to cling to life, you saw how slender were the ties left to bind him. Discoursing with him latterly on this subject, he expressed himself with a pettishness, which I thought unworthy of him. In our walks about his suburban retreat (as he called it) at Shacklewell, some children belonging to a school of industry had met us, and bowed and courtesied, as he thought, in an especial manner to *him*. "They take me for a visiting governor," he muttered earnestly. He had a horror, which he carried to a foible, of looking like anything important and parochial. He thought that he approached nearer to that stamp daily. He had a general aversion from being treated like a grave or respectable character, and kept a wary eye upon the advances of age that should so entitle him. He herded always, while it was possible, with people younger than himself. He did not conform to the march of time, but was dragged along in the procession. His manners lagged behind his years. He was too much of the boy-man. The *toga virilis* never sat gracefully on his shoulders. The impressions of infancy had burnt into him, and he resented the impertinence

of manhood. These were weaknesses; but such as they were, they are a key to explicate some of his writings.

He left little property behind him. Of course, the little that is left (chiefly in India bonds) devolves upon his cousin Bridget. A few critical dissertations were found in his *escritoire*, which have been handed over to the Editor of this Magazine, in which it is to be hoped thay will shortly appear, retaining his accustomed signature.

He has himself not obscurely hinted that his employment lay in a public office. The gentlemen in the Export department of the East India House will forgive me, if I acknowledge the readiness with which they assisted me in the retrieval of his few manuscripts. They pointed out in a most obliging manner the desk, at which he had been planted for forty years; showed me ponderous tomes of figures, in his own remarkably neat hand, which, more properly than his few printed tracts, might be called his "Works." They seemed affectionate to his memory, and universally commended his expertness in book-keeping. It seems he was the inventor of some ledger, which should combine the precision and certainty of the Italian double entry (I think they called it) with the brevity and facility of some newer German system—but I am not able to appreciate the worth of the discovery. I have often heard him express a warm regard for his associates in office, and how fortunate he considered himself in having his lot thrown in amongst them. There is more sense, more discourse, more shrewdness, and even talent, among these clerks (he would say) than in twice the number of authors by profession that I have conversed with. He would brighten up sometimes upon the "old days of the India House," when he consorted with Woodroffe, and Wissett, and Peter Corbet (a descendant and worthy representative, bating the point of sanctity, of old facetious Bishop Corbet), and Hoole who translated Tasso, and Bartlemy Brown whose father (God assoil him therefore) modernised Walton—and sly warm-hearted old Jack Cole (King Cole they called him in those days), and Campe, and Fombelle—and a world of choice spirits, more than I can remember to name, who associated in those days with Jack Burrell (the *bon vivant* of the South Sea House), and little Eyton (said to be a *facsimile* of Pope—he was a miniature of a gentleman) that was cashier under him, and Dan Voight of the Custom House that left the famous library.

Well, Elia is gone—for aught I know, to be reunited with them—and these poor traces of his pen are all we have to show

for it. How little survives of the wordiest authors! Of all they said or did in their lifetime, a few glittering words only! His Essays found some favourers, as they appeared separately; they shuffled their way in the crowd well enough singly; how they will *read*, now they are brought together, is a question for the publishers, who have thus ventured to draw out into one piece his "weaved-up follies."

PHIL-ELIA.

CHARLES LAMB'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

CHARLES LAMB, born in the Inner Temple, 10th February, 1775; educated in Christ's Hospital; afterwards a clerk in the Accountants' Office, East India House; pensioned off from that service, 1825, after thirty-three years' service; is now a gentleman at large, can remember few specialities in his life worth noting, except that he once caught a swallow flying (*teste suâ manu*). Below the middle stature; cast of face slightly Jewish, with no Judaic tinge in his complexional religion; stammers abominably, and is therefore more apt to discharge his occasional conversation in a quaint aphorism, or a poor quibble, than in set and edifying speeches; has consequently been libelled as a person always aiming at wit, which, as he told a dull fellow that charged him with it, is at least as good as aiming at dulness: a small eater, but not drinker; confesses a partiality for the production of the Juniper-Berry; was a fierce smoker of tobacco, but may be resembled to a volcano burnt out, emitting only now and then a casual puff. Has been guilty of obtruding upon the Public a Tale, in prose, called Rosamund Gray; a Dramatic sketch, named John Woodvil; a Farewell Ode to Tobacco, with sundry other Poems, and light prose matter, collected in Two slight crown Octavos, and pompously christened his Works, tho' in fact they were his Recreations; and his true works may be found on the Shelves of Leadenhall Street, filling some hundred folios. He is also the true Elia, whose Essays are extant in a little volume, published a year or two since; and rather better known from that name without a meaning, than from anything he has done, or can hope to do, in his own. He also was the first to draw the Public attention to the old English Dramatists, in a work called "Specimens of English Dramatic Writers who lived about the Time of Shakspeare," published about fifteen

years since. In short, all his merits and demerits to set forth would take to the end of Mr. Upcott's book, and then not be told truly.

He died 18 , much lamented.*

Witness his hand,

CHARLES LAMB.

10th April, 1827.

* To anybody.—Please to fill up these dates.

A DEATH-BED

IN A LETTER TO R. H., ESQ., OF B——

I CALLED upon you this morning, and found that you were gone to visit a dying friend. I had been upon a like errand. Poor N. R. has lain dying now almost a week; such is the penalty we pay for having enjoyed through life a strong constitution. Whether he knew me or not, I know not, or whether he saw me through his poor glazed eyes; but the group I saw about him, I shall not forget. Upon the bed, or about it, were assembled his Wife, their two Daughters, and poor deaf Robert, looking doubly stupified. There they were, and seemed to have been sitting all the week. I could only reach out a hand to Mrs. R. Speaking was impossible in that mute chamber. By this time it must all be over with him. In him I have a loss the world cannot make up. He was my friend, and my father's friend, for all the life that I can remember. I seem to have made foolish friendships since. Those are the friendships which outlast a second generation. Old as I am getting, in his eyes I was still the child he knew me. To the last he called me Jemmy. I have none to call me Jemmy now. He was the last link that bound me to B——. You are but of yesterday. In him I seem to have lost the old plainness of manners and singleness of heart. Lettered he was not; his reading scarcely exceeded the Obituary of the old Gentleman's Magazine, to which he has never failed of having recourse for these last fifty years. Yet there was the pride of literature about him from that slender perusal; and moreover from his office of archive-keeper to your ancient city, in which he must needs pick up some equivocal Latin; which, among his less literary friends, assumed the air of a very pleasant pedantry. Can I forget the erudite look with which, having tried to puzzle out the text of a Black-lettered

Chaucer in your Corporation Library, to which he was a sort of Librarian, he gave it up with this consolatory reflection—"Jemmy," said he, "I do not know what you find in these very old books, but I observe, there is a deal of very indifferent spelling in them." His jokes (for he had some) are ended; but they were old Perennials, staple, and always as good as new. He had one Song, that spake of "the flat bottoms of our foes coming over in darkness," and alluded to a threatened Invasion, many years since blown over; this he reserved to be sung on Christmas Night, which we always passed with him, and he sung it with the freshness of an impending event. How his eyes would sparkle when he came to the passage:

> We'll still make 'em run, and we'll still make 'em sweat,
> In spite of the Devil and Brussels' Gazette!

What is the Brussels' Gazette now? I cry, while I indite these trifles. His poor girls who are, I believe, compact of solid goodness, will have to receive their afflicted mother at an unsuccessful home in a petty village in ——shire, where for years they have been struggling to raise a Girls' School with no effect. Poor deaf Robert (and the less hopeful for being so) is thrown upon a deaf world, without the comfort to his father on his death-bed of knowing him provided for. They are left almost provisionless. Some life assurance there is; but, I fear, not exceeding ——. Their hopes must be from your Corporation, which their father has served for fifty years. Who or what are your Leading Members now, I know not. Is there any, to whom without impertinence, you can represent the true circumstances of the family? You cannot say good enough of poor R., and his poor wife. Oblige me and the dead, if you can.

TABLE TALK

(1) The greatest pleasure I know, is to do a good action by stealth, and to have it found out by accident.

(2) 'Tis unpleasant to meet a beggar. It is painful to deny him; and if you relieve him, it is so much out of your pocket.

(3) Men marry for fortune, and sometimes to please their fancy; but, much oftener than is suspected, they consider what the world will say of it; how such a woman in their friends' eyes will look at the head of a table. Hence we see so many

insipid beauties made wives of, that could not have struck the particular fancy of any man, that had any fancy at all. These I call *furniture wives*; as men buy *furniture pictures*, because they suit this or that niche in their dining parlours.

(4) Your universally cried-up beauties are the very last choice which a man of taste would make. What pleases all, cannot have that individual charm which makes this or that countenance engaging to you, and to you only, perhaps you know not why. What gained the fair Gunnings' titled husbands, who, after all, turned out very sorry wives? Popular repute.

(5) It is a sore trial when a daughter shall marry against her father's approbation. A little hard-heartedness, and aversion to a reconcilement, is almost pardonable. After all, Will Dockwray's way is perhaps the wisest. His best-loved daughter made a most imprudent match; in fact, eloped with the last man in the world that her father would have wished her to marry. All the world said that he would never speak to her again. For months she durst not write to him, much less come near him. But, in a casual rencounter, he met her in the streets of Ware;—Ware, that will long remember the mild virtues of William Dockwray, Esq. What said the parent to his disobedient child, whose knees faltered under her at the sight of him? "Ha, Sukey, is it you?" with that benevolent aspect, with which he paced the streets of Ware, venerated as an angel, "come and dine with us on Sunday"; then turning away, and again turning back, as if he had forgotten something, he added, "and, Sukey, do you hear, bring your husband with you." This was all the reproof she ever heard from him. Need it be added, that the match turned out better for Susan than the world expected?

(6) Amidst the complaints of the wide spread of infidelity among us, it is consolatory that a sect is sprung up in the heart of the metropolis, and is daily on the increase, of teachers of that healing doctrine which Pope upheld, and against which Voltaire directed his envenomed wit. We mean those practical preachers of optimism, or the belief that *Whatever is is best*—the Cads of Omnibuses; who, from their little back pulpits – not once in three or four hours, as those Proclaimers of "God and his prophet" in Mussulman countries; but every minute, at the entry or exit of a brief passenger, are heard, in an almost prophetic tone, to exclaim—(Wisdom crying out, as it were, in the streets,)—ALL'S RIGHT.

(7) Advice is not so commonly thrown away as is imagined. We seek it in difficulties. But, in common speech, we are apt to confound with it *admonition*; as when a friend reminds one that drink is prejudicial to the health, etc. We do not care to be told of that which we know better than the good man that admonishes. M—— sent to his friend L——, who is no water-drinker, a twopenny tract "Against the Use of Fermented Liquors." L—— acknowledged the obligation, as far as to *twopence*. Penotier's advice was the safest after all:

"I advised him——"

But I must tell you. The dear, good-meaning, no-thinking creature, had been dumb-founding a company of us with a detail of inextricable difficulties, in which the circumstances of an acquaintance of his were involved. No clue of light offered itself. He grew more and more misty as he proceeded. We pitied his friend, and thought,

God help the man so wrapt in error's endless maze:

when, suddenly brightening up his placid countenance, like one that had found out a riddle, and looked to have the solution admired, "At last," said he, "I advised him——"

Here he paused, and here we were again interminably thrown back. By no possible guess could any of us aim at the drift of the meaning he was about to be delivered of. "I advised him," he repeated, "to have some *advice* upon the subject." A general approbation followed; and it was unanimously agreed, that, under all the circumstances of the case, no sounder or more judicious counsel could have been given.

(8) The vices of some men are magnificent. Compare the amours of Henry the Eighth and Charles the Second. The Stuart had mistresses—the Tudor *kept* wives.

(9) We are ashamed at sight of a monkey—somehow as we are shy of poor relations.

(10) C—— imagined a Caledonian compartment in Hades, where there should be fire without sulphur.

(11) Absurd images are sometimes irresistible. I will mention two. An elephant in a coach-office gravely coming to have his trunk booked;—a mermaid over a fish-kettle cooking her own tail.

(12) It is a desideratum in works that treat *de re culinariâ*, that we have no rationale of sauces, or theory of mixed flavours; as to show why cabbage is reprehensible with roast beef, laudable

with bacon; why the haunch of mutton seeks the alliance of currant jelly, the shoulder civilly declineth it; why a loin of veal, (a pretty problem,) being itself unctuous, seeketh the adventitious lubricity of melted butter; and why the same part in pork, not more oleaginous, abhorreth it; why the French bean sympathises with the flesh of deer; why salt fish points to parsnip, brawn makes a dead set at mustard; why cats prefer valerian to hearts-ease, old ladies *vice-versâ*,—though this is rather travelling out of the road of the dietetics, and may be thought a question more curious than relevant;—why salmon (a strong sapor *per se*) fortifieth its condition with the mighty lobster sauce, whose embraces are fatal to the delicater relish of the turbot; why oysters in death rise up against the contamination of brown sugar, while they are posthumously amorous of vinegar; why the sour mango and the sweet jam, by turns, court and are accepted by the compliable mutton hash—she not yet decidedly declaring for either. We are as yet but in the empirical stage of cookery. We feed ignorantly, and want to be able to give a reason of the relish that is in us; so that if Nature should furnish us with a new meat, or be prodigally pleased to restore the phœnix, upon a *given* flavour, we might be able to pronounce instantly, on philosophical principles, what the sauce to it should be—what the curious adjuncts.

(13) It is rather an unpleasant fact, that the ugliest and awkwardest of brute animals have the greatest resemblance to man: the monkey and the bear. The monkey is ugly too, (so we think,) because he is like man—as the bear is awkward, because the cumbrous action of its huge paws seems to be a preposterous imitation of the motions of the human hands. Men and apes are the only animals that have hairs on the under eye-lid. Let kings know this.

(14) My friend Hume (not M.P.) has a curious manuscript in his possession, the original draught of the celebrated "Beggar's Petition," (who cannot say by heart the "Beggar's Petition"?) as it was written by some school usher (as I remember) with corrections interlined from the pen of Oliver Goldsmith. As a specimen of the doctor's improvement, I recollect one most judicious alteration—

A pamper'd menial drove me from the door.

It stood originally,—

A livery servant drove me, etc.

Here is an instance of poetical or artificial language properly

substituted for the phrase of common conversation; against Wordsworth.

(15) "Pray God your honour relieve me," said a poor beadswoman to my friend L—— one day; "I have seen better days." "So have I, my good woman," retorted he, looking up at the welkin which was just then threatening a storm——and the jest (he will have it) was as good to the beggar as a tester.

It was at all events kinder than consigning her to the stocks, or the parish beadle——

But L. has a way of viewing things in rather a paradoxical light on some occasions.

(16) Our ancestors, the noble old Puritans of Cromwell's day, could distinguish between a day of religious rest and a day of recreation; and while they exacted a vigorous abstinence from all amusements (even to the walking out of nursery maids with their little charges in the fields) upon the Sabbath; in the lieu of the superstitious observance of the Saints' Days, which they abrogated, they humanely gave to the apprentices, and poorer sort of people, every alternate Thursday for a day of entire sport and recreation. A strain of piety and policy to be commended above the profane mockery of the Stuarts and their Book of Sports.

(17) I was once amused—there is a pleasure in *affecting* affectation—at the indignation of a crowd that was justling in with me at the pit-door of Covent Garden Theatre, to have a sight of Master Betty—then at once in his dawn and in his meridian—in Hamlet. I had been invited quite unexpectedly to join a party, whom I met near the door of the play-house, and I happened to have in my hand a large octavo of Johnson and Stevens's *Shakspeare*, which, the time not admitting of my carrying it home, of course went with me to the theatre. Just in the very heat and pressure of the doors opening—the *rush*, as they term it—I deliberately held the volume over my head, open at the scene in which the young Roscius had been most cried up, and quietly read by the lamp-light. The clamour became universal. "The affectation of the fellow," cried one. "Look at that gentleman *reading*, papa," squeaked a young lady, who, in her admiration of the novelty, almost forgot her fears. I read on, "He ought to have his book knocked out of his hand," exclaimed a pursy cit, whose arms were too fast pinioned to his side to suffer him to execute his kind intention. Still I read on—and, till the time came to pay my money, kept

as unmoved as Saint Anthony at his holy offices, with the satyrs, apes, and hobgoblins mopping, and making mouths at him, in the picture; while the good man sits undisturbed at the sight as if he were sole tenant of the desart.—The individual rabble (I recognised more than one of their ugly faces), had damned a slight piece of mine but a few nights since, and I was determined the culprits should not a second time put me out of countenance.

(18) It should seem almost impossible for a person to have arrived at the age of manhood, and never once to have heard or suspected that there have been people born before our times. Yet this fact I am obliged to conclude from the fragment of a conversation which I overheard between two of the lower order of Irish, who passed me in Holborn the other day. One of them, it seems, had appealed in defence of his argument to the opinions of practice of their forefathers, for I heard the other exclaim "the ancients! who were they?"—"What!" retorted his companion, with an air of insolent superiority, "did you never hear of the ancients? did you never read of them?" They had got too far for me to hear the conclusion of their extraordinary discourse; but I have often thought that it would be amusing to register the sentences, and scraps of sentences, which one catches up in a day's walk about the town; I mean in the way of fair and honest listening, without way-laying one's neighbour for more than he would be willing to communicate. From these flying words, with the help of a little imagination, one might often piece out a long conversation foregone.

(19) Time and place give everything its propriety. Strolling one day in Twickenham meadows, I was struck with the appearance of something dusky on the grass, which my eye could not immediately reduce into a shape. Going nearer, I discovered the cause of the phenomenon. In the midst of the most rural scene in the world, the day glorious over head, the wave of Father Thames rippling deliciously by him, lay outstretched at his ease upon Nature's verdant carpet—a chimney-sweeper:

> A spot like which
> Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
> Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw.

There is no reason in nature why a chimney-sweeper should not indulge a taste for rural objects, but somehow the ideas were discordant. It struck me like an inartificial discord in music.

It was a combination of *urbs in rure*, which my experience had not prepared me to anticipate.

(20) Where would a man of taste chuse his town residence, setting convenience out of the question? Palace-yard,—for its contiguity to the Abbey, the Courts of Justice, the Sittings of Parliament, Whitehall, the Parks, etc.,—I hold of all places in these two great cities of London and Westminster to be the most classical and eligible. Next in classicality, I should name the four Inns of Court: they breathe a learned and collegiate air; and of them, chiefly

> ————those bricky towers
> The which on Thames' broad aged back doth ride,
> Where now the studious Lawyers have their bowers;
> There whilom wont the Templar Knights to bide,
> Till they decay'd through pride—

as Spenser describes, evidently with a relish. I think he had Garden Court in his eye. The noble hall which stands there must have been built about that time. Next to the Inns of Court, Covent-Garden, for its *rus in urbe*, its wholesome scents of early fruits and vegetables, its tasteful church and arcades,—above all, the neighbouring theatres, cannot but be approved of. I do not know a fourth station comparable to or worthy to be named after these. To an antiquarian, every spot in London, or even Southwark, teems with historical associations, local interest. He could not chuse amiss. But to me, who have no such qualifying knowledge, the Surrey side of the water is peculiarly distasteful. It is impossible to connect any thing interesting with it. I never knew a man of taste to live, what they term, *over the bridge*. Observe, in this place I speak solely of *chosen* and *voluntary* residence.

CRITICAL ESSAYS

CURIOUS FRAGMENTS, EXTRACTED FROM A COMMONPLACE BOOK

WHICH BELONGED TO ROBERT BURTON, THE FAMOUS AUTHOR OF THE ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY

Extract I

I Democritus Junior have put my finishing pen to a tractate *De Melancholia*, this day, December 5, 1620. First, I blesse the Trinity, which hath given me health to prosecute my worthlesse studies thus far, and make supplication, with a *Laus Deo*, if in any case these my poor labours may be found instrumental to weede out black melancholy, carking cares, harte-grief, from the mind of man. *Sed hoc magis volo quam expecto.*

I turn now to my book, *i nunc liber, goe forth, my brave Anatomy, child of my brain-sweat*, and yee, *candidi lectores*, lo! here I give him up to you, even do with him what you please, my masters. Some, I suppose, will applaud, commend, cry him up (these are my friends) hee is a *flos rarus*, forsooth, a none-such, a Phœnix, (concerning whom see *Plinius* and *Mandeuille*, though *Fienus de monstris* doubteth at large of such a bird, whom *Montaltus* confuting argueth to have been a man *malæ scrupulositatis*, of a weak and cowardlie faith: *Christopherus a Vega* is with him in this.) Others again will blame, hiss, reprehende in many things, cry down altogether, my collections, for crude, inept, putid, *post cœnam scripta, Coryate could write better upon a full meal*, verbose, inerudite, and not sufficiently abounding in authorities, *dogmata*, sentences of learneder writers which have been before me, when as that first named sort clean otherwise judge of my labours to bee nothing else but a *messe of opinions*, a vortex attracting indiscriminate, gold, pearls, hay, straw, wood, excrement, an exchange, tavern, marte, for foreigners to congregate, Danes, Swedes, Hollanders, Lombards, so many strange faces, dresses, salutations, languages, all which *Wolfius* behelde with great content upon the Venetian Rialto, as he describes diffusedly in his book the world's Epitome,

which *Sannazar* so bepraiseth, *e contra* our Polydore can see nothing in it; they call me singular, a pedant, fantastic, words of reproach in this age, which is all too neoteric and light for my humour.

One cometh to me sighing, complaining. He expected universal remedies in my Anatomy; so many cures as there are distemperatures among men. I have not put his affection in my cases. Hear you his case. My fine Sir is a lover, an *enamorato*, a Pyramus, a Romeo; he walks seven years disconsolate, moping, because he cannot enjoy his miss, *insanus amor* is his melancholy, the man is mad; *delirat*, he dotes; all this while his Glycera is rude, spiteful, not to be entreated, churlish, spits at him, yet exceeding fair, gentle eyes, (which is a beauty,) hair lustrous and *smiling*, the trope is none of mine, *Æneas Sylvius* hath *crines ridentes*—in conclusion she is wedded to his rival, a boore, a *Corydon*, a rustic, *omnino ignarus*, *he can scarce construe Corderius*, yet haughty, fantastic, *opiniatre*. The lover travels, goes into foreign parts, peregrinates, *amoris ergo*, sees manners, customs, not English, converses with pilgrims, lying travellers, monks, hermits, those cattle, pedlars, travelling gentry, *Egyptians*, natural wonders, unicorns (though *Aldobrandus* will have them to be figments), satyrs, semi-viri, apes, monkeys, baboons, curiosities artificial, *pyramides*, Virgilius his tombe, relicks, bones, which are nothing but ivory as *Melancthon* judges, though *Cornutus* leaneth to think them bones of dogs, cats, (why not men?) which subtill priests vouch to have been saints, martyrs, *heu Pietas!* By that time he has ended his course, *fugit hora*, seven other years are expired, gone by, time is he should return, he taketh ship for Britaine, much desired of his friends, *favebant venti*, *Neptune is curteis*, after some weekes at sea he landeth, rides post to town, greets his family, kinsmen, *compotores*, *those jokers his friends that were wont to tipple with him at alehouses*; these wonder now to see the change, *quantum mutatus*, *the man is quite another thing*, he is disenthralled, manumitted, he wonders what so bewitched him, he can now both see, hear, smell, handle, converse with his mistress, single by reason of the death of his rival, a widow having children, grown willing, prompt, amorous, showing no such great dislike to second nuptials, he might have her for asking, no such thing, his mind is changed, he loathes his former meat, had liever eat ratsbane, aconite, his humour is to die a bachelour; marke the conclusion. In this humour of celibate seven other years are consumed in idleness, sloth, world's

pleasures, which fatigate, satiate, induce wearinesse, vapours, *tædium vitæ*: When upon a day, behold a wonder, *redit Amor*, the man is as sick as ever, he is commenced lover upon the old stock, walks with his hand thrust in his bosom for negligence, moping he leans his head, face yellow, beard flowing and incomposite, eyes sunken, *anhelus, breath wheezy and asthmatical, by reason of over-much sighing*: society he abhors, solitude is but a hell; what shall he doe? all this while his mistresse is forward, coming, *amantissima, ready to jump at once into his mouth*, her he hateth, feels disgust when she is but mentioned, thinks her ugly, old, a painted Jesabeel, Alecto, Megara, and Tisiphone all at once, a Corinthian Lais, a strumpet, only not handsome; that which he affecteth so much, that which drives him mad, distracted, phrenetic, beside himself, is no beauty which lives, nothing *in rerum naturâ*, (so he might entertain a hope of a cure) but something *which is not*, can never be, a certain *fantastic opinion* or *notional image* of his mistresse, *that which she was*, and that which hee thought her to be, in former times, how beautiful! torments him, frets him, follows him, makes him that he wishes to die.

This Caprichio, *Sir Humourous*, hee cometh to me to be cured. I counsel marriage with his mistresse, according to Hippocrates his method, together with milk diet, herbs, aloes, and wild parsley, good in such cases, though Avicenna preferreth some sorts of wild fowl, teals, widgeons, becca ficos, which men in Sussex eat. He flies out in a passion, ho! ho; and falls to calling me names, dizzard, ass, lunatic, moper, Bedlamite, Pseudo-Democritus. I smile in his face, bidding him be patient, tranquil, to no purpose, he still rages, I think this man must fetch his remedies from Utopia, Fairy Land, Islands in the Moone, etc.

Extract II

* * * * * Much disputacyons of fierce wits amongst themselves, in logomachies, subtile controversies, many dry blows given on either side, contentions of learned men, or such as would be so thought, as *Bodinus de Periodis* saith of such an one, *arrident amici ridet mundus*, in English, this man his cronies they cocker him up, they flatter him, he would fayne appear somebody, meanwhile the world thinks him no better than a dizzard, a ninny, a sophist. * * * * * Philosophy running mad, madness philosophising, much idle-learned enquiries,

what truth is? and no issue, fruit, of all these noises, only huge books are written, and who is the wiser? * * * * * Men sitting in the Doctor's chair, we marvel how they got there, being *homines intellectûs pulverulenti*, as *Trincauellius* notes; they care not so they may raise a dust to smother the eyes of their oppugners; *homines parvulissimi* as *Lemnius*, whom *Alcuin* herein taxeth of a crude Latinism; dwarfs, minims, the least little men, these spend their time, and it is odds but they lose their time and wits too into the bargain, chasing of nimble and retiring Truth: Her they prosecute, her still they worship, *libant*, they make libations, spilling the wine, as those old Romans in their sacrificials, *Cerealia*, *May-games*: Truth is the game all these hunt after, to the extreme perturbacyon and drying up of the moistures, *humidum radicale exsiccant*, as *Galen*, in his counsels to one of these wear-wits, brain-moppers, spunges, saith. * * * * and for all this *nunquam metam attingunt*, and how should they? They bowle awry, shooting beside the marke; whereas it should appear, that *Truth absolute* on this planet of ours is scarcely to be found, but in her stede *Queene Opinion* predominates, governs, whose shifting and ever mutable *Lampas*, me seemeth, is man's destinie to follow, she præcurseth, she guideth him, before his uncapable eyes she frisketh her tender lights, which entertayne the childman, untill what time his sight be strong to endure the vision of *Very Truth*, which is in the heavens, the vision beatifical, as *Anianus* expounds in his argument against certain mad wits which helde God to be corporeous; these were dizzards, fools, *gothammites*. * * * * but and if *Very Truth* be extant indeede on earth, as some hold she it is which actuates men's deeds, purposes, ye may in vaine look for her in the learned universities, halls, colleges. Truth is no Doctoresse, she takes no degrees at Paris or Oxford, amongst great clerks, disputants, subtile Aristotles, men *nodosi ingenii, able to take Lully by the chin*, but oftentimes to such an one as myself, an *Idiota* or common person, *no great things*, melancholizing in woods where waters are, quiet places by rivers, fountains, whereas the silly man expecting no such matter, thinketh only how best to delectate and refresh his mynde continually with *Natura* her pleasaunt scenes, woods, water-falls, or *Art* her statelie gardens, parks, terraces, *Belvideres*, on a sudden the goddesse herself *Truth* has appeared, with a shyning lyghte, and a sparklyng countenance, so as yee may not be able lightly to resist her. * * * * *

Extract III

This morning, May 2, 1662, having first broken my fast upon eggs and cooling salades, mellows, water-cresses, those herbes, according to *Villanovus* his prescription, who disallows the use of meat in a morning as gross, fat, hebetant, *feral*, altogether fitter for wild beasts than men, *e contra* commendeth this herb-diete for gentle, humane, active, conducing to contemplation in most men, I betook myselfe to the nearest fields. (Being in London, I commonly dwell in the *suburbes*, as airiest, quietest, *loci musis propriores*, free from noises of caroches, waggons, mechanick and base workes, workshoppes, also sights, pageants, spectacles of outlandish birds, fishes, crocodiles, *Indians*, mermaids, adde quarrels, fightings, wranglings of the common sort, *plebs*, the rabble, duelloes with fists, *proper to this island*, at which the stiletto'd and secrete *Italian* laughs.) Withdrawing myselfe from these buzzing and illiterate vanities, with a *bezo las manos* to the city, I begin to inhale, draw in, snuff up, as horses *dilatis naribus* snort the fresh aires, with exceeding great delight, when suddenly there crosses me a procession sad, heavy, dolourous, tristfull, melancholick, able to change mirth into dolour, and overcast a clearer atmosphere than possibly the neighbourhoods of so great a citty can afford. An old man, a poore man, deceased, is borne on men's shoulders to a poore buriall, without solemnities of hearse, mourners, plumes, *mutæ personæ, those personate actors that will weep if yee shew them a piece of silver*; none of those customed civilities of children, kinsfolk, *dependants*, following the coffin; he died a poore man, his friends *accessores opum, those cronies of his that stuck by him so long as he had a penny*, now leave him, forsake him, shun him, desert him; they think it much to follow his putrid and stinking carcase to the grave; his children, if he had any, for commonly the case stands thus, this poore man his son dies before him, he survives, poore, indigent, base, dejected, miserable, etc., or if he have any which survive him, *sua negotia agunt*, they mind their own business, forsooth, cannot, will not, find time, leisure, *inclination, extremum munus perficere*, to follow to the pit their old indulgent father, which loved them, stroked them, caressed them, cockering them up, *quantum potuit*, as farre as his means extended, while they were babes, chits, *minims*, hee may rot in his grave, lie stinking in the sun *for them*, have no buriall at all, they care not. *O nefas!* Chiefly I noted the coffin to have been *without a pall*, nothing but a few planks, of cheapest wood

that could be had, *naked*, having none of the ordinary *symptomata* of a funerall, those *locularii* which bare the body having on diversely coloured coats, *and none black*: (one of these reported the deceased to have been an almsman seven yeares, a pauper, harboured and fed in the workhouse of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, to whose proper burying-ground he was now going for interment). All which when I behelde, hardly I refrained from weeping, and incontinently I fell to musing: "If this man had been rich, a *Crœsus*, a *Crassus, or as rich as Whittington*, what pompe, charge, lavish cost, expenditure, of rich buriall, *ceremoniall-obsequies, obsequious ceremonies*, had been thought too good for such an one; what store of panegyricks, elogies, funeral orations, etc. some beggarly poetaster, worthy to be beaten for his ill rimes, crying him up, hee was rich, generous, bountiful, polite, learned, *a Mœcenas*, while as in very deede he was nothing lesse: what weeping, sighing, sorrowing, honing, complaining, kinsmen, friends, relatives, fourtieth cousins, poor relatives, lamenting for the deceased; hypocriticall heirs, sobbing, striking their breasts (they care not if he had died a year ago); so many clients, dependants, flatterers, *parasites, cunning Gnathoes*, tramping on foot after the hearse, all their care is, who shall stand fairest with the successour; he mean time (like enough) spurns them from him, spits at them, treads them under his foot, will have nought to do with any such cattle. I think him in the right: *Hæc sunt majora gravitate Heracliti. These follies are enough to give crying Heraclitus a fit of the spleene.*

HYPOCHONDRIACUS

By myself walking,
To myself talking,
When as I ruminate
On my untoward fate,
Scarcely seem I
Alone sufficiently,
Black thoughts continually
Crowding my privacy;
They come unbidden,
Like foes at a wedding,
Thrusting their faces
In better guests places,

G. F. COOKE AS RICHARD III.

From an engraving
after the picture by C. R. Leslie.

See p. 178

Peevish and malecontent,
Clownish, impertinent,
Dashing the merriment;
So in like fashions
Dim cogitations
Follow and haunt me,
Striving to daunt me,
In my heart festering,
In my ears whispering,
"Thy friends are treacherous,
Thy foes are dangerous,
Thy dreams ominous."

Fierce Anthropophagi,
Spectra, Diaboli,
What scared St. Anthony,
Hobgoblins, Lemures,
Dreams of Antipodes,
Night-riding Incubi
Troubling the fantasy,
All dire illusions
Causing confusions;
Figments heretical,
Scruples fantastical,
Doubts diabolical;
Abaddon vexeth me,
Mahu perplexeth me,
Lucifer teareth me ——

Jesu! Maria! liberate nos ab his diris tentationibus Inimici.

COOKE'S "RICHARD THE THIRD"

Some few of us remember to have *seen*, and all of us have heard our fathers tell of Quin, and Garrick, and Barry, and some faint traditional notices are left us of their manner in particular scenes, and their stile of delivering certain emphatic sentences. Hence our curiosity is excited when a *new Hamlet* or a *new Richard* makes his appearance, in the first place, to inquire, how he acted in the *Closet scene*, in the *Tent scene*, how he looked, and how he started, when the *Ghost* came on, and how he cried

Off with his head. So much for Buckingham.

We do not reprehend this minute spirit of comparison. On the contrary, we consider it as a delightful artifice, by which we connect the recreations of the past with those of the present generation, what pleased our fathers with what pleases us. We love to witness the obstinate attachments, the unconquerable prejudices (as they seem to us), of the old men, our seniors, the whimsical gratification they appear to derive from the very refusal to be gratified; to hear them talk of the good *old* actors, whose race is for ever extinct.

With these impressions, we attended the first appearance of Mr. Cooke, in the character of *Richard the Third*, last winter. —We thought that he "bustled" through the scenes with at least as much spirit and effect as any of his predecessors whom we remember in the part, and was not deficient in the delivery of any of those rememberable speeches and exclamations, which old prescription hath set up as *criteria* of comparison. Now that the grace of freshness is worn off, and Mr. Cooke is no longer a novitiate candidate for public favour, we propose to enter into the question—whether that popular actor is right or wrong in his conception of the great outlines of the character; those strong essential differences which separate *Richard* from all the other creations of Shakspeare. We say *of Shakspeare*; for though the Play, which passes for *his* upon the *Stage*, materially differs from *that* which *he* wrote under the same title, being in fact little better than a compilation or a cento of passages extracted from other of his Plays, and applied with gross violation of propriety (as we are ready at any time to point out), besides some miserable additions, which *he* never could have written; all together producing an inevitable inconsistency of character, sufficient to puzzle and confound the *best Actor*; *yet*, in this chaos and perplexity, we are of opinion, that it becomes an Actor to show his taste, by adhering, as much as possible, to the spirit and intention of the original Author, and to consult his *safety* in *steering* by the *Light*, which Shakspeare holds out to him, as by a great *Leading Star*. Upon these principles, we presume to censure Mr. Cooke, while we are ready to acknowledge, that this Actor presents us with a very original and very forcible portrait (if not of the *man Richard*, whom Shakspeare drew, yet) of the *monster Richard*, as he exists in the *popular idea*, in *his own exaggerated* and *witty self-abuse*, in the overstrained representations of the parties who were *sufferers* by his *ambition*; and, above all, in the impertinent and wretched *scenes*, so absurdly foisted in by some, who

have thought themselves capable of adding to what *Shakspeare wrote*.

But of Mr. Cooke's *Richard*:

1st, *His predominant and masterly simulation.*

He has a tongue can wheedle with the DEVIL.

It has been the policy of that antient and grey simulator, in all ages, to hide his *horns* and *claws*. The *Richard* of Mr. Cooke perpetually obtrudes *his*. We see the effect of his deceit uniformly *successful*, but we do not comprehend *how* it *succeeds*. We can put ourselves, by a very common fiction, into the place of the individuals upon whom it acts, and say, that, in the like case, we should not have been alike credulous. The hypocrisy is too glaring and visible. It resembles more the shallow cunning of a mind which is its own dupe, than the profound and practised art of so powerful an intellect as *Richard's*. It is too obstreperous and loud, breaking out into *triumphs* and *plaudits* at its own success, like an unexercised *novitiate* to *tricks*. It has none of the silent confidence, and steady self-command of the *experienced politician*; it possesses none of that *fine address*, which was necessary to have betrayed the heart of *Lady Anne*, or even to have imposed upon the duller wits of the Lord *Mayor* and *Citizens*.

2ndly, *His habitual jocularity*, the effect of buoyant spirits, and an elastic mind, rejoicing in its own powers, and in the success of its machinations. This quality of unstrained mirth accompanies *Richard*, and is a prime feature in his character. It never leaves him; in plots, in stratagems, and in the midst of his bloody devices, it is perpetually driving him upon wit, and jests, and personal satire, fanciful allusions, and quaint felicities of phrase. It is one of the chief artifices by which the consummate master of dramatic effect has contrived to soften the horrors of the scene, and to make us contemplate a bloody and vicious character with delight. Nowhere, in any of his plays, is to be found so much of sprightly colloquial dialogue, and soliloquies of genuine humour, as in *Richard*. This character of unlaboured mirth Mr. Cooke seems entirely to pass over, and substitutes in its stead the coarse, taunting humour, and clumsy merriment, of a low-minded assassin.

3rdly, *His personal deformity*.—When the *Richard* of Mr. Cooke makes allusions to his own *form*, they seem accompanied with *unmixed distaste* and *pain*, like some obtrusive and *haunting* idea——But surely the *Richard* of Shakspeare mingles in

these allusions a perpetual reference to his own powers and capacities, by which he is enabled to surmount these petty objections; and the joy of a defect *conquered*, or *turned* into an advantage, is one cause of these very allusions, and of the satisfaction with which his mind recurs to them. These allusions themselves are made in an ironical and good-humoured spirit of exaggeration—the most bitter of them are to be found in his self-congratulating soliloquy spoken in the very moment and crisis of joyful exultation on the success of his unheard of courtship.—No *partial excellence* can satisfy for this absence of a *just general conception*—otherwise we are inclined to admit, that, in the delivery of *single sentences*, in a *new* and often *felicitous* light thrown upon *old* and *hitherto misconstrued* passages, no actor that we have seen has gone beyond Mr. Cooke. He is always *alive* to the scene before him; and by the *fire* and *novelty* of his manner, he seems likely to infuse some *warm blood* into the *frozen declamatory stile*, into which our theatres have for some time past been degenerating.

MR. COOKE AS "LEAR"

COVENT GARDEN.

Mr. Cooke performed *Lear* in the celebrated Tragedy of that name at this Theatre last night. It is a character little suited to his talents. In the expression of strong and turbulent passions, he will always find his forte; but he wants gentleness and softness for melting and melancholy scenes. Whatever, therefore, may be his excellence in the ambitious and heroic *Richard*, those who have duly weighed his peculiar powers could not expect much from his representation of the broken-hearted *Lear*. No principle can be more clear, than that cruelty and ingratitude are black in proportion to the weakness and helplessness of the object on which they are exercised. The great master of the human heart accordingly makes this good old King represent himself as a man standing upon the last verge of life—a man "eighty years old and upwards." It is from turning such a man as this out of doors, and by his ungrateful children, too, to "bide the pelting of the pityless storm," that the interest principally arises. In this line, so clearly marked by the poet, Mr. Cooke showed a total want of discrimination. His step was almost uniformly firm, and

his whole deportment too vigorous for his years. The heart, therefore, could not feel that pity which the sight of a deserving object, physically unable to contend with unmerited hardships, never fails to produce. His enunciation also, which was clear and strong, had none of the tremulousness of feeble old age, and his voice seldom succeeded in the modulation of tones sufficiently plaintive and delicate to express the agonies of a broken heart. The scene where he imprecates a curse upon the undutiful *Goneril* was given with energy, but without that anguish which must wring a parent's bosom in such a situation. The mad scene with *Edgar* was also a very imperfect piece of acting, and few of the beautiful passages with which the piece abounds, received that exquisite colouring and embellishment with which Mr. Kemble in the same character calls down such plaudits in the other House. Mr. Cooke having so evidently placed himself in the way of comparison, this allusion cannot be deemed invidious.—This new essay should, however, make him slow to venture beyond his depth, and justifies our apprehension that he does not possess an elasticity of mind, a pliancy of powers, to enable him to pursue his rival through all the variety of his characters with the same success that he encounters him on Bosworth field.

ON THE TRAGEDIES OF SHAKSPEARE

CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR FITNESS FOR STAGE REPRESENTATION

TAKING a turn the other day in the Abbey, I was struck with the affected attitude of a figure, which I do not remember to have seen before, and which upon examination proved to be a whole-length of the celebrated Mr. Garrick. Though I would not go so far with some good catholics abroad as to shut players altogether out of consecrated ground, yet I own I was not a little scandalised at the introduction of theatrical airs and gestures into a place set apart to remind us of the saddest realities. Going nearer, I found inscribed under this harlequin figure the following lines:

> To paint fair Nature, by divine command,
> Her magic pencil in his glowing hand,
> A Shakspeare rose; then, to expand his fame
> Wide o'er this breathing world, a Garrick came,
> Though sunk in death the forms the Poet drew,
> The Actor's genius bade them breathe anew;

> Though, like the bard himself, in night they lay,
> Immortal Garrick call'd them back to day:
> And till Eternity with pow'r sublime
> Shall mark the mortal hour of hoary Time,
> Shakspeare and Garrick like twin-stars shall shine,
> And earth irradiate with a beam divine.

It would be an insult to my readers' understandings to attempt anything like a criticism on this farrago of false thoughts and nonsense. But the reflection it led me into was a kind of wonder, how, from the days of the actor here celebrated to our own, it should have been the fashion to compliment every performer in his turn, that has had the luck to please the town in any of the great characters of Shakspeare, with the notion of possessing a *mind congenial with the poet's*: how people should come thus unaccountably to confound the power of originating poetical images and conceptions with the faculty of being able to read or recite the same when put into words;[1] or what connection that absolute mastery over the heart and soul of man, which a great dramatic poet possesses, has with those low tricks upon the eye and ear, which a player by observing a few general effects, which some common passion, as grief, anger, etc. usually has upon the gestures and exterior, can so easily compass. To know the internal workings and movements of a great mind, of an Othello or a Hamlet for instance, the *when* and the *why* and the *how far* they should be moved; to what pitch a passion is becoming; to give the reins and to pull in the curb exactly at the moment when the drawing in or the slackening is most graceful; seems to demand a reach of intellect of a vastly different extent from that which is employed upon the bare imitation of the signs of these passions in the countenance or gesture, which signs are usually observed to be most lively and emphatic in the weaker sort of minds, and which signs can, after all, but indicate some passion, as I said before,—anger, or grief, generally; but of the motives and grounds of the passion, wherein it differs from the same passion in low and vulgar natures, of these the actor can give no more idea by his face or gesture than the eye (without a metaphor) can speak, or the muscles utter intelligible sounds. But such is the instantaneous

[1] It is observable that we fall into this confusion only in *dramatic* recitations. We never dream that the gentleman who reads Lucretius in public with great applause is therefore a great poet and philosopher; nor do we find that Tom Davies, the bookseller, who is recorded to have recited the Paradise Lost better than any man in England in his day (though I cannot help thinking there must be some mistake in this tradition), was therefore, by his intimate friends, set upon a level with Milton.

nature of the impressions which we take in at the eye and ear at a play-house, compared with the slow apprehension oftentimes of the understanding in reading, that we are apt not only to sink the play-writer in the consideration which we pay to the actor, but even to identify in our minds, in a perverse manner, the actor with the character which he represents. It is difficult for a frequent play-goer to disembarrass the idea of Hamlet from the person and voice of Mr. K. We speak of Lady Macbeth, while we are in reality thinking of Mrs. S. Nor is this confusion incidental alone to unlettered persons, who, not possessing the advantage of reading, are necessarily dependent upon the stage-player for all the pleasure which they can receive from the drama, and to whom the very idea of *what an author is* cannot be made comprehensible without some pain and perplexity of mind: the error is one from which persons otherwise not meanly lettered, find it almost impossible to extricate themselves.

Never let me be so ungrateful as to forget the very high degree of satisfaction which I received some years back from seeing for the first time a tragedy of Shakspeare performed, in which those two great performers sustained the principal parts. It seemed to embody and realise conceptions which had hitherto assumed no distinct shape. But dearly do we pay all our life after for this juvenile pleasure, this sense of distinctness. When the novelty is past, we find to our cost that instead of realising an idea, we have only materialised and brought down a fine vision to the standard of flesh and blood. We have let go a dream, in quest of an unattainable substance.

How cruelly this operates upon the mind, to have its free conceptions thus cramped and pressed down to the measure of a strait-lacing actuality, may be judged from that delightful sensation of freshness, with which we turn to those plays of Shakspeare which have escaped being performed, and to those passages in the acting plays of the same writer which have happily been left out in the performance. How far the very custom of hearing anything *spouted*, withers and blows upon a fine passage, may be seen in those speeches from Henry the Fifth, etc. which are current in the mouths of school-boys, from their being to be found in *Enfield Speakers*, and such kind of books. I confess myself utterly unable to appreciate that celebrated soliloquy in Hamlet, beginning "To be, or not to be," or to tell whether it be good, bad, or indifferent, it has been so handled and pawed about by declamatory boys and men, and

torn so inhumanly from its living place and principle of continuity in the play, till it is become to me a perfect dead member.

It may seem a paradox, but I cannot help being of opinion that the plays of Shakspeare are less calculated for performance on a stage than those of almost any other dramatist whatever. Their distinguishing excellence is a reason that they should be so. There is so much in them, which comes not under the province of acting, with which eye, and tone, and gesture, have nothing to do.

The glory of the scenic art is to personate passion, and the turns of passion; and the more coarse and palpable the passion is, the more hold upon the eyes and ears of the spectators the performer obviously possesses. For this reason, scolding scenes, scenes where two persons talk themselves into a fit of fury, and then in a surprising manner talk themselves out of it again, have always been the most popular upon our stage. And the reason is plain, because the spectators are here most palpably appealed to, they are the proper judges in this war of words, they are the legitimate ring that should be formed round such "intellectual prize-fighters." Talking is the direct object of the imitation here. But in all the best dramas, and in Shakspeare above all, how obvious it is, that the form of *speaking*, whether it be in soliloquy or dialogue, is only a medium, and often a highly artificial one, for putting the reader or spectator into possession of that knowledge of the inner structure and workings of mind in a character, which he could otherwise never have arrived at *in that form of composition* by any gift short of intuition. We do here as we do with novels written in the *epistolary form*. How many improprieties, perfect solecisms in letter-writing, do we put up with in *Clarissa* and other books, for the sake of the delight which that form upon the whole gives us.

But the practice of stage representation reduces everything to a controversy of elocution. Every character, from the boisterous blasphemings of Bajazet to the shrinking timidity of womanhood, must play the orator. The love-dialogues of Romeo and Juliet, those silver-sweet sounds of lovers' tongues by night; the more intimate and sacred sweetness of nuptial colloquy between an Othello or a Posthumus with their married wives; all those delicacies which are so delightful in the reading, as when we read of those youthful dalliances in Paradise—

> ————As beseem'd
> Fair couple link'd in happy nuptial league,
> Alone;

by the inherent fault of stage representation, how are these things sullied and turned from their very nature by being exposed to a large assembly; when such speeches as Imogen addresses to her lord, come drawling out of the mouth of a hired actress, whose courtship, though nominally addressed to the personated Posthumus, is manifestly aimed at the spectators, who are to judge of her endearments and her returns of love.

The character of Hamlet is perhaps that by which, since the days of Betterton, a succession of popular performers have had the greatest ambition to distinguish themselves. The length of the part may be one of their reasons. But for the character itself, we find it in a play, and therefore we judge it a fit subject of dramatic representation. The play itself abounds in maxims and reflexions beyond any other, and therefore we consider it as a proper vehicle for conveying moral instruction. But Hamlet himself—what does he suffer meanwhile by being dragged forth as a public schoolmaster, to give lectures to the crowd! Why, nine parts in ten of what Hamlet does, are transactions between himself and his moral sense, they are the effusions of his solitary musings, which he retires to holes and corners and the most sequestered parts of the palace to pour forth; or rather, they are the silent meditations with which his bosom is bursting, reduced to *words* for the sake of the reader, who must else remain ignorant of what is passing there. These profound sorrows, these light-and-noise-abhorring ruminations, which the tongue scarce dares utter to deaf walls and chambers, how can they be represented by a gesticulating actor, who comes and mouths them out before an audience, making four hundred people his confidants at once. I say not that it is the fault of the actor so to do; he must pronounce them *ore rotundo*, he must accompany them with his eye; he must insinuate them into his auditory by some trick of eye, tone, or gesture, or he fails. *He must be thinking all the while of his appearance, because he knows that all the while the spectators are judging of it.* And this is the way to represent the shy, negligent, retiring Hamlet.

It is true that there is no other mode of conveying a vast quantity of thought and feeling to a great portion of the audience, who otherwise would never earn it for themselves by reading; and the intellectual acquisition gained this way may, for aught I know, be inestimable; but I am not arguing that Hamlet should not be acted, but how much Hamlet is made another thing by being acted. I have heard much of the wonders which Garrick performed in this part; but as I never saw him, I must have leave

to doubt whether the representation of such a character came within the province of his art. Those who tell me of him, speak of his eye, of the magic of his eye, and of his commanding voice: physical properties, vastly desirable in an actor, and without which he can never insinuate meaning into an auditory,—but what have they to do with Hamlet? what have they to do with intellect? In fact, the things aimed at in theatrical representation, are to arrest the spectator's eye upon the form and the gesture, and so to gain a more favourable hearing to what is spoken: it is not what the character is, but how he looks; not what he says, but how he speaks it. I see no reason to think that if the play of Hamlet were written over again by some such writer as Banks or Lillo, retaining the process of the story, but totally omitting all the poetry of it, all the divine features of Shakspeare, his stupendous intellect; and only taking care to give us enough of passionate dialogue, which neither Banks nor Lillo was never at a loss to furnish; I see not how the effect could be much different upon an audience, nor how the actor has it in his power to represent Shakspeare to us differently from his representation of Banks or Lillo. Hamlet would still be a youthful accomplished prince, and must be gracefully personated; he might be puzzled in his mind, wavering in his conduct, seemingly-cruel to Ophelia; he might see a ghost, and start at it, and address it kindly when he found it to be his father; all this in the poorest and most homely language of the servilest creeper after nature that ever consulted the palate of an audience; without troubling Shakspeare for the matter: and I see not but there would be room for all the power which an actor has, to display itself. All the passions and changes of passion might remain: for those are much less difficult to write or act than is thought, it is a trick easy to be attained, it is but rising or falling a note or two in the voice, a whisper with a significant foreboding look to announce its approach, and so contagious the counterfeit appearance of any emotion is, that let the words be what they will, the look and tone shall carry it off and make it pass for deep skill in the passions.

It is common for people to talk of Shakspeare's plays being *so natural*; that everybody can understand him. They are natural indeed, they are grounded deep in nature, so deep that the depth of them lies out of the reach of most of us. You shall hear the same persons say that George Barnwell is very natural, and Othello is very natural, that they are both very deep; and to them they are the same kind of thing. At the one they

sit and shed tears, because a good sort of young man is tempted by a naughty woman to commit a *trifling peccadillo*, the murder of an uncle or so,[1] that is all, and so comes to an untimely end, which is *so moving*; and at the other, because a blackamoor in a fit of jealousy kills his innocent white wife: and the odds are that ninety-nine out of a hundred would willingly behold the same catastrophe happen to both the heroes, and have thought the rope more due to Othello than to Barnwell. For of the texture of Othello's mind, the inward construction marvellously laid open with all its strengths and weaknesses, its heroic confidences and its human misgivings, its agonies of hate springing from the depths of love, they see no more than the spectators at a cheaper rate, who pay their pennies a-piece to look through the man's telescope in Leicester-fields, see into the inward plot and topography of the moon. Some dim thing or other they see, they see an actor personating a passion, of grief, or anger, for instance, and they recognise it as a copy of the usual external effects of such passions; or at least as being true to *that symbol of the emotion which passes current at the theatre for it*, for it is often no more than that: but of the grounds of the passion, its correspondence to a great or heroic nature, which is the only worthy object of tragedy,—that common auditors know anything of this, or can have any such notions dinned into them by the mere strength of an actor's lungs,—that apprehensions foreign to them should be thus infused into them by storm, I can neither believe, nor understand how it can be possible.

We talk of Shakspeare's admirable observation of life, when we should feel, that not from a petty inquisition into those cheap and everyday characters which surrounded him, as they surround us, but from his own mind, which was, to borrow a phrase of Ben Jonson's, the very "sphere of humanity," he fetched those images of virtue and of knowledge, of which every one of us

[1] If this note could hope to meet the eye of any of the Managers, I would intreat and beg of them, in the name of both the Galleries, that this insult upon the morality of the common people of London should cease to be eternally repeated in the holiday weeks. Why are the 'Prentices of this famous and well-governed city, instead of an amusement, to be treated over and over again with a nauseous sermon of George Barnwell? Why *at the end of their visioes* are we to place the *gallows*? Were I an uncle, I should not much like a nephew of mine to have such an example placed before his eyes. It is really making uncle-murder too trivial to exhibit it as done upon such slight motives;—it is attributing too much to such characters as Millwood:—it is putting things into the heads of good young men, which they would never otherwise have dreamed of. Uncles that think anything of their lives, should fairly petition the Chamberlain against it.

recognising a part, think we comprehend in our natures the whole; and oftentimes mistake the powers which he positively creates in us, for nothing more than indigenous faculties of our own minds, which only waited the application of corresponding virtues in him to return a full and clear echo of the same.

To return to Hamlet.—Among the distinguishing features of that wonderful character, one of the most interesting (yet painful) is that soreness of mind which makes him treat the intrusions of Polonius with harshness, and that asperity which he puts on in his interviews with Ophelia. These tokens of an unhinged mind (if they be not mixed in the latter case with a profound artifice of love, to alienate Ophelia by affected discourtesies, so to prepare her mind for the breaking off of that loving intercourse, which can no longer find a place amidst business so serious as that which he has to do) are parts of his character, which to reconcile with our admiration of Hamlet, the most patient consideration of his situation is no more than necessary; they are what we *forgive afterwards*, and explain by the whole of his character, but *at the time* they are harsh and unpleasant. Yet such is the actor's necessity of giving strong blows to the audience, that I have never seen a player in this character, who did not exaggerate and strain to the utmost these ambiguous features,—these temporary deformities in the character. They make him express a vulgar scorn at Polonius which utterly degrades his gentility, and which no explanation can render palateable; they make him show contempt, and curl up the nose at Ophelia's father,—contempt in its very grossest and most hateful form; but they get applause by it: it is natural, people say; that is, the words are scornful, and the actor expresses scorn, and that they can judge of: but why so much scorn, and of that sort, they never think of asking.

So to Ophelia.—All the Hamlets that I have ever seen, rant and rave at her as if she had committed some great crime, and the audience are highly pleased, because the words of the part are satirical, and they are enforced by the strongest expression of satirical indignation of which the face and voice are capable. But then, whether Hamlet is likely to have put on such brutal appearances to a lady whom he loved so dearly, is never thought on. The truth is, that in all such deep affections as had subsisted between Hamlet and Ophelia, there is a stock of *supererogatory love*, (if I may venture to use the expression) which in any great grief of heart, especially where that which preys upon the mind cannot be communicated, confers a kind of

indulgence upon the grieved party to express itself, even to its heart's dearest object, in the language of a temporary alienation; but it is not alienation, it is a distraction purely, and so it always makes itself to be felt by that object: it is not anger, but grief assuming the appearance of anger,—love awkwardly counterfeiting hate, as sweet countenances when they try to frown: but such sternness and fierce disgust as Hamlet is made to show, is no counterfeit, but the real face of absolute aversion, —of irreconcileable alienation. It may be said he puts on the madman; but then he should only so far put on this counterfeit lunacy as his own real distraction will give him leave; that is, incompletely, imperfectly; not in that confirmed, practised way, like a master of his art, or as Dame Quickly would say, "like one of those harlotry players."

I mean no disrespect to any actor, but the sort of pleasure which Shakspeare's plays give in the acting seems to me not at all to differ from that which the audience receive from those of other writers; and, *they being in themselves essentially so different from all others,* I must conclude that there is something in the nature of acting which levels all distinctions. And in fact, who does not speak indifferently of the Gamester and of Macbeth as fine stage performances, and praise the Mrs. Beverley in the same way as the Lady Macbeth of Mrs. S.? Belvidera, and Calista, and Isabella, and Euphrasia, are they less liked than Imogen, or than Juliet, or than Desdemona? Are they not spoken of and remembered in the same way? Is not the female performer as great (as they call it) in one as in the other? Did not Garrick shine, and was he not ambitious of shining in every drawling tragedy that his wretched day produced,—the productions of the Hills and the Murphys and the Browns,—and shall he have that honour to dwell in our minds for ever as an inseparable concomitant with Shakspeare? A kindred mind! O who can read that affecting sonnet of Shakspeare which alludes to his profession as a player:

> Oh for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
> The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
> That did not better for my life provide
> Than public means which public custom breeds—
> Thence comes it that my name receives a brand;
> And almost thence my nature is subdued
> To what it works in, like the dyer's hand—

Or that other confession:

> Alas! 'tis true, I have gone here and there,
> And made myself a motly to thy view,
> Gor'd mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear—

Who can read these instances of jealous self-watchfulness in our sweet Shakspeare, and dream of any congeniality between him and one that, by every tradition of him, appears to have been as mere a player as ever existed; to have had his mind tainted with the lowest players' vices,—envy and jealousy, and miserable cravings after applause; one who in the exercise of his profession was jealous even of the women-performers that stood in his way; a manager full of managerial tricks and stratagems and finesse: that any resemblance should be dreamed of between him and Shakspeare,—Shakspeare who, in the plenitude and consciousness of his own powers, could with that noble modesty, which we can neither imitate nor appreciate, express himself thus of his own sense of his own defects:

> Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
> Featur'd like him, like him with friends possest;
> Desiring *this man's art, and that man's scope.*

I am almost disposed to deny to Garrick the merit of being an admirer of Shakspeare. A true lover of his excellencies he certainly was not; for would any true lover of them have admitted into his matchless scenes such ribald trash as Tate and Cibber, and the rest of them, that

> With their darkness durst affront his light,

have foisted into the acting plays of Shakspeare? I believe it impossible that he could have had a proper reverence for Shakspeare, and have condescended to go through that interpolated scene in Richard the Third, in which Richard tries to break his wife's heart by telling her he loves another woman, and says, "if she survives this she is immortal." Yet I doubt not he delivered this vulgar stuff with as much anxiety of emphasis as any of the genuine parts: and for acting, it is as well calculated as any. But we have seen the part of Richard lately produce great fame to an actor by his manner of playing it, and it lets us into the secret of acting, and of popular judgments of Shakspeare derived from acting. Not one of the spectators who have witnessed Mr. C.'s exertions in that part, but has come away with a proper conviction that Richard is a very wicked man, and kills little children in their beds, with something like the pleasure which the giants and ogres in children's books are represented to have taken in that practice; moreover, that he is very close and shrewd and devilish cunning, for you could see that by his eye.

But is in fact this the impression we have in reading the

Richard of Shakspeare? Do we feel anything like disgust, as we do at that butcher-like representation of him that passes for him on the stage? A horror at his crimes blends with the effect that we feel, but how is it qualified, how is it carried off, by the rich intellect which he displays, his resources, his wit, his buoyant spirits, his vast knowledge and insight into characters, the poetry of his part,—not an atom of all which is made perceivable in Mr. C.'s way of acting it. Nothing but his crimes, his actions, is visible; they are prominent and staring. The murderer stands out, but where is the lofty genius, the man of vast capacity,—the profound, the witty, accomplished Richard?

The truth is, the Characters of Shakspeare are so much the objects of meditation rather than of interest or curiosity as to their actions, that while we are reading any of his great criminal characters,—Macbeth, Richard, even Iago,—we think not so much of the crimes which they commit, as of the ambition, the aspiring spirit, the intellectual activity, which prompts them to overleap these moral fences. Barnwell is a wretched murderer; there is a certain fitness between his neck and the rope; he is the legitimate heir to the gallows; nobody who thinks at all can think of any alleviating circumstances in his case to make him a fit object of mercy. Or to take an instance from the higher tragedy, what else but a mere assassin is Glenalvon? Do we think of anything but of the crime which he commits, and the rack which he deserves? That is all which we really think about him. Whereas in corresponding characters in Shakspeare so little do the actions comparatively affect us, that while the impulses, the inner mind in all its perverted greatness, solely seems real and is exclusively attended to, the crime is comparatively nothing. But when we see these things represented, the acts which they do are comparatively everything, their impulses nothing. The state of sublime emotion into which we are elevated by those images of night and horror which Macbeth is made to utter, that solemn prelude with which he entertains the time till the bell shall strike which is to call him to murder Duncan,—when we no longer read it in a book, when we have given up that vantage-ground of abstraction which reading possesses over seeing, and come to see a man in his bodily shape before our eyes actually preparing to commit a murder, if the acting be true and impressive, as I have witnessed it in Mr. K.'s performance of that part, the painful anxiety about the act, the natural longing to prevent it while

it yet seems unperpetrated, the too close pressing semblance of reality, give a pain and an uneasiness which totally destroy all the delight which the words in the book convey, where the deed doing never presses upon us with the painful sense of presence: it rather seems to belong to history,—to something past and inevitable, if it has anything to do with time at all. The sublime images, the poetry alone, is that which is present to our minds in the reading.

So to see Lear acted,—to see an old man tottering about the stage with a walking-stick, turned out of doors by his daughters in a rainy night, has nothing in it but what is painful and disgusting. We want to take him into shelter and relieve him. That is all the feeling which the acting of Lear ever produced in me. But the Lear of Shakspeare cannot be acted. The contemptible machinery by which they mimic the storm which he goes out in, is not more inadequate to represent the horrors of the real elements, than any actor can be to represent Lear: they might more easily propose to personate the Satan of Milton upon a stage, or one of Michael Angelo's terrible figures. The greatness of Lear is not in corporal dimension, but in intellectual: the explosions of his passion are terrible as a volcano; they are storms turning up and disclosing to the bottom that sea, his mind, with all its vast riches. It is his mind which is laid bare. This case of flesh and blood seems too insignificant to be thought on; even as he himself neglects it. On the stage we see nothing but corporal infirmities and weakness, the impotence of rage: while we read it, we see not Lear, but we are Lear,—we are in his mind, we are sustained by a grandeur which baffles the malice of daughters and storms; in the aberrations of his reason, we discover a mighty irregular power of reasoning, immethodised from the ordinary purposes of life, but exerting its powers, as the wind bloweth where it listeth, at will upon the corruptions and abuses of mankind. What have looks, or tones, to do with that sublime identification of his age with that of the *heavens themselves*, when in his reproaches to them for conniving at the injustice of his children, he reminds them that "they themselves are old"? What gesture shall we appropriate to this? What has the voice or the eye to do with such things? But the play is beyond all art, as the tamperings with it show: it is too hard and stony; it must have love-scenes, and a happy ending. It is not enough that Cordelia is a daughter, she must shine as a lover too. Tate has put his hook in the nostrils of this Leviathan, for Garrick and his followers, the showmen of the

scene, to draw the mighty beast about more easily. A happy ending!—as if the living martyrdom that Lear had gone through,—the flaying of his feelings alive, did not make a fair dismissal from the stage of life the only decorous thing for him. If he is to live and be happy after, if he could sustain this world's burden after, why all this pudder and preparation,—why torment us with all this unnecessary sympathy? As if the childish pleasure of getting his gilt robes and spectre again could tempt him to act over again his misused station,—as if at his years, and with his experience, anything was left but to die.

Lear is essentially impossible to be represented on a stage. But how many dramatic personages are there in Shakspeare, which though more tractable and feasible (if I may so speak) than Lear, yet from some circumstance, some adjunct to their character, are improper to be shown to our bodily eye. Othello for instance. Nothing can be more soothing, more flattering to the nobler parts of our natures, than to read of a young Venetian lady of the highest extraction, through the force of love and from a sense of merit in him whom she loved, laying aside every consideration of kindred, and country, and colour, and wedding with a *coal-black Moor*—(for such he is represented, in the imperfect state of knowledge respecting foreign countries in those days, compared with our own, or in compliance with popular notions, though the Moors are now well enough known to be by many shades less unworthy of a white woman's fancy)—it is the perfect triumph of virtue over accidents, of the imagination over the senses. She sees Othello's colour in his mind. But upon the stage, when the imagination is no longer the ruling faculty, but we are left to our poor unassisted senses, I appeal to every one that has seen Othello played, whether he did not, on the contrary, sink Othello's mind in his colour; whether he did not find something extremely revolting in the courtship and wedded caresses of Othello and Desdemona; and whether the actual sight of the thing did not overweigh all that beautiful compromise which we make in reading. And the reason it should do so is obvious, because there is just so much reality presented to our senses as to give a perception of disagreement, with not enough of belief in the internal motives,—all that which is unseen,—to overpower and reconcile the first and obvious prejudices.[1] What we see upon a stage is

[1] The error of supposing that because Othello's colour does not offend us in the reading, it should also not offend us in the seeing, is just such a fallacy as supposing that an Adam and Eve in a picture shall affect us

body and bodily action; what we are conscious of in reading is almost exclusively the mind, and its movements: and this I think may sufficiently account for the very different sort of delight with which the same play so often affects us in the reading and the seeing.

It requires little reflection to perceive, that if those characters in Shakspeare which are within the precincts of nature, have yet something in them which appeals too exclusively to the imagination, to admit of their being made objects to the senses without suffering a change and a diminution,—that still stronger the objection must lie against representing another line of characters, which Shakspeare has introduced to give a wildness and a supernatural elevation to his scenes, as if to remove them still farther from that assimilation to common life in which their excellence is vulgarly supposed to consist. When we read the incantations of those terrible beings the Witches in Macbeth, though some of the ingredients of their hellish composition savour of the grotesque, yet is the effect upon us other than the most serious and appalling that can be imagined? Do we not feel spell-bound as Macbeth was? Can any mirth accompany a sense of their presence? We might as well laugh under a consciousness of the principle of Evil himself being truly and really present with us. But attempt to bring these things on to a stage, and you turn them instantly into so many old women, that men and children are to laugh at. Contrary to the old saying, that "seeing is believing," the sight actually destroys the faith; and the mirth in which we indulge at their expense, when we see these creatures upon a stage, seems to be a sort of indemnification which we make to ourselves for the terror which they put us in when reading made them an object of belief,—when we surrendered up our reason to the poet, as children to their nurses and their elders; and we laugh at our fears, as children who thought they saw something in the dark, triumph when the bringing in of a candle discovers the vanity of their fears. For this exposure of supernatural agents upon a stage is truly bringing in a candle to expose their own delusiveness. It is the solitary taper and the book that generates a faith in

just as they do in the poem. But in the poem we for a while have Paradisaical senses given us, which vanish when we see a man and his wife without clothes in the picture. The painters themselves feel this, as is apparent by the awkward shifts they have recourse to, to make them look not quite naked; by a sort of prophetic anachronism, antedating the invention of fig-leaves. So in the reading of the play, we see with Desdemona's eyes; in the seeing of it, we are forced to look with our own.

these terrors: a ghost by chandelier light, and in good company, deceives no spectators,—a ghost that can be measured by the eye, and his human dimensions made out at leisure. The sight of a well-lighted house, and a well-dressed audience, shall arm the most nervous child against any apprehensions: as Tom Brown says of the impenetrable skin of Achilles with his impenetrable armour over it, "Bully Dawson would have fought the devil with such advantages."

Much has been said, and deservedly, in reprobation of the vile mixture which Dryden has thrown into the Tempest: doubtless without some such vicious alloy, the impure ears of that age would never have sate out to hear so much innocence of love as is contained in the sweet courtship of Ferdinand and Miranda. But is the Tempest of Shakspeare at all a fit subject for stage representation? It is one thing to read of an enchanter and to believe the wondrous tale while we are reading it; but to have a conjuror brought before us in his conjuring-gown, with his spirits about him, which none but himself and some hundred of favoured spectators before the curtain are supposed to see, involves such a quantity of the *hateful incredible*, that all our reverence for the author cannot hinder us from perceiving such gross attempts upon the senses to be in the highest degree childish and inefficient. Spirits and fairies cannot be represented; they cannot even be painted,—they can only be believed. But the elaborate and anxious provision of scenery, which the luxury of the age demands, in these cases works a quite contrary effect to what is intended. That which in comedy, or plays of familiar life, adds so much to the life of the imitation, in plays which appeal to the higher faculties, positively destroys the illusion which it is introduced to aid. A parlour or a drawing-room,—a library opening into a garden,—a garden with an alcove in it,—a street, or the piazza of Covent Garden, does well enough in a scene; we are content to give as much credit to it as it demands; or rather, we think little about it,—it is little more than reading at the top of a page, "Scene, a Garden"; we do not imagine ourselves there, but we readily admit the imitation of familiar objects. But to think by the help of painted trees and caverns, which we know to be painted, to transport our minds to Prospero, and his island and his lonely cell;[1] or by the aid of a fiddle dexterously thrown in, in an

[1] It will be said these things are done in pictures. But pictures and scenes are very different things. Painting is a world of itself, but in scene-painting there is the attempt to deceive; and there is the discordancy never to be got over, between painted scenes and real people.

interval of speaking, to make us believe that we hear those supernatural noises of which the isle was full:—the Orrery Lecturer at the Haymarket might as well hope, by his musical glasses cleverly stationed out of sight behind his apparatus, to make us believe that we do indeed hear the chrystal spheres ring out that chime, which if it were to inwrap our fancy long, Milton thinks,

> Time would run back and fetch the age of gold,
> And speckled vanity
> Would sicken soon and die,
> And leprous Sin would melt from earthly mould;
> Yea Hell itself would pass away,
> And leave its dolorous mansions to the peering day.

The Garden of Eden, with our first parents in it, is not more impossible to be shown on a stage, than the Enchanted Isle, with its no less interesting and innocent first settlers.

The subject of Scenery is closely connected with that of the Dresses, which are so anxiously attended to on our stage. I remember the last time I saw Macbeth played, the discrepancy I felt at the changes of garment which he varied,—the shiftings and re-shiftings, like a Romish priest at mass. The luxury of stage-improvements, and the importunity of the public eye, require this. The coronation robe of the Scottish monarch was fairly a counterpart to that which our King wears when he goes to the Parliament-house,—just so full and cumbersome, and set out with ermine and pearls. And if things must be represented, I see not what to find fault with in this. But in reading, what robe are we conscious of? Some dim images of royalty—a crown and sceptre—may float before our eyes, but who shall describe the fashion of it? Do we see in our mind's eye what Webb or any other robe-maker could pattern? This is the inevitable consequence of imitating everything, to make all things natural. Whereas the reading of a tragedy is a fine abstraction. It presents to the fancy just so much of external appearances as to make us feel that we are among flesh and blood, while by far the greater and better part of our imagination is employed upon the thoughts and internal machinery of the character. But in acting, scenery, dress, the most contemptible things, call upon us to judge of their naturalness.

Perhaps it would be no bad similitude, to liken the pleasure which we take in seeing one of these fine plays acted, compared with that quiet delight which we find in the reading of it, to the different feelings with which a reviewer, and a man that is not a reviewer, reads a fine poem. The accursed critical habit,—

the being called upon to judge and pronounce, must make it quite a different thing to the former. In seeing these plays acted, we are affected just as judges. When Hamlet compares the two pictures of Gertrude's first and second husband, who wants to see the pictures? But in the acting, a miniature must be lugged out; which we know not to be the picture, but only to show how finely a miniature may be represented. This showing of everything, levels all things: it makes tricks, bows, and curtsies, of importance. Mrs. S. never got more fame by any thing than by the manner in which she dismisses the guests in the banquet-scene in Macbeth: it is as much remembered as any of her thrilling tones or impressive looks. But does such a trifle as this enter into the imaginations of the readers of that wild and wonderful scene? Does not the mind dismiss the feasters as rapidly as it can? Does it care about the gracefulness of doing it? But by acting, and judging of acting, all these non-essentials are raised into an importance, injurious to the main interest of the play.

I have confined my observations to the tragic parts of Shakspeare. It would be no very difficult task to extend the inquiry to his comedies; and to show why Falstaff, Shallow, Sir Hugh Evans, and the rest, are equally incompatible with stage representation. The length to which this Essay has run will make it, I am afraid, sufficiently distasteful to the Amateurs of the Theatre, without going any deeper into the subject at present.

THE NEW STYLE OF ACTING

The difference of the present race of actors from those I remember, seems to be, that less study is found necessary for the profession than was formerly judged to be requisite. Parsons and Dodd must have *thought* a good deal before they could have matured such exhibitions as their *Foresight* and *Aguecheek*. We do not want capable actors, but their end is answered with less pains. The way is to get a kind of familiarity with the audience, to strike up a kind of personal friendship, to be "hail fellow, well met," with them: those excellent comedians, Bannister and Dowton, who had least need of these arts, have not disdained to use them. You see a reciprocity of greeting and goodwill between them and the house at first entrance. It is amazing how much carelessness of acting slips in by this

intercourse. After all, it is a good-natured fault, and a great many kindly feelings are generated in the galleries by this process, feelings which are better than criticism.

Russell's *Jerry Sneak* appears to me to be a piece of the richest colouring we have on the present stage in the comic line, if, indeed, it be entirely comic, for its effect on me, in some passages, is even pathetic. The innocent, good-natured tones with which *Sneak* makes his ineffectual appeals to the sympathy of the hard-hearted and contemptuous betrayer of his honour, the Major; the slight dash of idiotism which the Actor contrives to throw into the part (which Foote, I will venture to say, never dreamt of), but yet which has the happiest effect in turning what would be *contempt*, an ill-natured and heart-injuring passion, into *pity* and *compassion*; are some of the nicest effects of observation, and tend to unvulgarise the part, if I may be allowed the expression.—For a piece of pure drollery, Liston's *Lord Grizzle* has no competitor. Comedy it is not, nor farce. It is neither nature, nor exaggerated nature. It is a creation of the actor's own. *Grizzle* seems a being of another world, such an one as *Nicolaus Klimius* might have seen at the fantastic courts of his *World under the Ground*. It is an abstract idea of court qualities—an apotheosis of apathy. Ben Jonson's abstractions of courtiers in his *Cynthia's Revels* and *Every Man out of his Humour*, what a treat it would be to see them on the stage done in the same manner!

What I most despair of is, seeing again a succession of such actresses as Mrs. Mattocks, Miss Pope, and Mrs. Jordan. This coquetting between the performer and the public is carried to a shocking excess by some of the Ladies who play the first characters in what is called genteel comedy. Instead of playing their pretty airs upon their lover on the stage, as Mrs. Abingdon or Mrs. Cibber were content to do, or Mrs. Oldfield before them, their whole artillery of charms is now directed to ensnare—whom? —why, the whole audience—a thousand gentlemen, perhaps—for this many-headed beast they furl and unfurl their fan, and teach their lips to curl in smiles, and their bosoms exhibit such pretty instructive heavings. These personal applications, which used to be a sort of sauce-piquant for the next epilogue, now give the standing relish to the whole play. I am afraid an actress who should omit them would not find her account in it. I am sure that the very absence of this fault in Miss Kelly, and her judicious attention to her part, with little or no reference to the spectators, is one cause why her varied excellencies,

though they are beginning to be perceived, have yet found their way more slowly to the approbation of the public, than they have deserved. Two or three more such instances would reform the stage, and drive off the Glovers, the Johnstons, and the St. Legers. O! when shall we see a female part acted in the quiet, unappealing manner of Miss Pope's *Miss Candour?* When shall we get rid of the Dalilahs of the stage?

PLAY-HOUSE MEMORANDA

I ONCE sat in the Pit of Drury-lane Theatre next to a blind man, who, I afterwards learned, was a street musician, well known about London. The play was *Richard the Third*, and it was curious to observe the interest which he took in every successive scene, so far more lively than could be perceived in any of the company around him. At those pathetic interviews between the *Queen* and *Duchess of York*, after the murder of the children, his eyes (or rather the places where eyes should have been) gushed out tears in torrents, and he sat intranced in attention, while every one about him was tittering, partly at him, and partly at the grotesque figures and wretched action of the women, who had been selected by managerial taste to personate those royal mourners. Having no drawback of sight to impair his sensibilities, he simply attended to the scene, and received its unsophisticated impression. *So much the rather her celestial light shone inward.* I was pleased with an observation which he made, when I asked him how he liked Kemble, who played *Richard.* I should have thought (said he) that that man had been reading something out of a book, if I had not known that I was in a play-house.

I was once amused in a different way by a knot of country people who had come to see a play at that same Theatre. They seemed perfectly inattentive to all the best performers for the first act or two, though the piece was admirably played, but kept poring in the play-bill, and were evidently watching for the appearance of one, who was to be the source of supreme delight to them that night. At length the expected actor arrived, who happened to be in possession of a very insignificant part, not much above a mule. I saw their faint attempt at raising a clap on his appearance, and their disappointment at not being seconded by the audience in general. I saw them try

to admire and to find out something very wonderful in him, and wondering all the while at the moderate sensation he produced. I saw their pleasure and their interest subside at last into flat mortification, when the riddle was at once unfolded by my recollecting that this performer bore the same name with an actor, then in the acme of his celebrity, at Covent-Garden, but who lately finished his theatrical and mortal career on the other side the Atlantic. They had come to see Mr. C——, but had come to the wrong house.

Is it a stale remark to say, that I have constantly found the interest excited at a play-house to bear an exact inverse proportion to the price paid for admission? Formerly, when my sight and hearing were more perfect, and my purse a little less so, I was a frequenter of the upper gallery in the old Theatres. The eager attention, the breathless listening, the anxiety not to lose a word, the quick anticipation of the significance of the the scene (every sense kept as it were upon a sharp look out), which are exhibited by the occupiers of those higher and now almost out-of-sight regions (who, going seldom to a play, cannot afford to lose anything by inattention), suffer some little diminution, as you descend to the lower or two-shilling ranks; but still the joy is lively and unallayed, save that by some little *incursion of manners*, the expression of it is expected to abate somewhat of its natural liveliness. The oaken plaudits of the trunk-maker would here be considered as going a little beyond the line.—In the pit first begins that accursed critical faculty, which, making a man the judge of his own pleasures, too often constitutes him the executioner of his own and others! You may see the *jealousy of being unduly pleased, the suspicion of being taken in to admire*; in short, the vile critical spirit, creeping and diffusing itself, and spreading from the wrinkled brows and cloudy eyes of the front row sages and newspaper reporters (its proper residence), till it infects and clouds over the thoughtless, vacant countenance of John Bull tradesmen, and clerks of counting-houses, who, but for that approximation, would have been contented to have grinned without rule, and to have been pleased without asking why. The sitting next a critic is contagious. Still now and then, a *genuine spectator* is to be found among them, a shopkeeper and his family, whose honest titillations of mirth, and generous chucklings of applause, cannot wait or be at leisure to take the cue from the sour judging faces about them. Haply they never dreamed that there were such animals in nature as critics or reviewers; even the idea of

MRS. JORDAN

Engraved by Worthington
after the painting by Romney.

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an author may be a speculation they never entered into; but they take the mirth they find as a pure effusion of the actor-folks, set there on purpose to make them fun. I love the uninquiring gratitude of such spectators. As for the Boxes, I never can understand what brings the people there. I see such frigid indifference, such unconcerned spectatorship, such impenetrability to pleasure or its contrary, such being *in the house* and yet not *of it*, certainly they come far nearer the nature of *the Gods*, upon the system of Lucretius at least, than those honest, hearty, well-pleased, unindifferent mortals above, who, from time immemorial, have had that name, upon no other ground than situation, assigned them.

Take the play-house altogether, there is a less sum of enjoyment than used to be. Formerly you might see something like the effect of novelty upon a citizen, his wife and daughters, in the Pit; their curiosity upon every new face that entered upon the stage. The talk of how they got in at the door, and how they were crowded upon some former occasion, made a topic till the curtain drew up. People go too often nowadays to make their ingress or egress of consequence. Children of seven years of age will talk as familiarly of the performers, aye and as knowingly (according to the received opinion) as grown persons; more than the grown persons in my time. Oh when shall I forget first seeing a play, at the age of five or six? It was *Artaxerxes*. Who played, or who sang in it, I know not. Such low ideas as actors' names, or actors' merits, never entered my head. The mystery of delight was not cut open and dissipated for me by those who took me there. It was *Artaxerxes* and *Arbaces* and *Mandane* that I saw, not Mr. Beard, or Mr. Leoni, or Mrs. Kennedy. It was all enchantment and a dream. No such pleasure has since visited me but in dreams. I was in Persia for the time, and the burning idol of their devotion in the Temple almost converted me into a worshipper. I was awe-struck, and believed those significations to be something more than elemental fires. I was, with Uriel, in the body of the sun.—What should I have gained by knowing (as I should have done, had I been born thirty years later) that that solar representation was a mere painted scene, that had neither fire nor light in itself, and that the royal phantoms, which passed in review before me, were but such common mortals as I could see every day out of my father's window? We crush the faculty of delight and wonder in children, by explaining every thing. We take them to the source of the Nile, and show them

the scanty runnings, instead of letting the beginnings of that seven-fold stream remain in impenetrable darkness, a mysterious question of wonderment and delight to ages.

THEATRICAL NOTICES

MISS BURRELL AS "DON GIOVANNI"

OLYMPIC THEATRE.

THIS theatre, fitted up with new and tasteful decorations, opened on Monday with a burletta founded upon a pleasant extravagance recorded of WILMOT the "mad Lord" of Rochester. The house, in its renovated condition, is just what play-houses should be, and once were, from its size admirably adapted for seeing and hearing, and only perhaps rather too well lit up. Light is a good thing, but to preserve the eyes is still better. ELLISTON and Mrs. EDWIN personated a reigning wit and beauty of the Court of CHARLES the Second to the life. But the charm of the evening to us, we confess, was the acting of Mrs. T. GOULD (late Miss BURRELL) in the burlesque *Don Giovanni* which followed. This admirable piece of foolery takes up our hero just where the legitimate drama leaves him, on the "burning marl." We are presented with a fair map of Tartarus, the triple-headed cur, the Furies, the Tormentors, and the Don, prostrate, thunder-smitten. But there is an elasticity in the original make of this *strange man*, as RICHARDSON would have called him. He is not one of those who change with the change of climate. He brings with him to his new habitation *ardours* as glowing and constant as any which he finds there. No sooner is he recovered from his first surprise, than he falls to his old trade, is caught "ogling *Proserpine*," and coquets with two she-devils at once, till he makes the house *too hot to hold him*; and *Pluto* (in whom a wise jealousy seems to produce the effects of kindness) turns him neck and heels out of his dominions —much to the satisfaction of *Giovanni*, who stealing a boat from Charon, and a pair of light heels from *Mercury*, or (as he familiarly terms him) *Murky*, sets off with flying colours, conveying to the world above the souls of three damsels, just eloped from Styx, to comfort his tender and new-born spiritualities on the journey. Arrived upon earth (with a new body, we are to suppose, but his old habits) he lights *a-propos*

upon a tavern in London, at the door of which, three merry weavers, widowers, are trouling a catch in triumph over their deceased spouses—

> They lie in yonder church-yard
> At rest—and so are we.

Their departed partners prove to be the identical lady ghosts who have accompanied the Don in his flight, whom he now delivers up in perfect health and good plight, not a jot the worse for their journey, to the infinite surprise, and consternation ill-dissembled, of their ill-fated twice-yoked mates. The gallantries of the Don in his second state of probation, his meeting with *Leporello*, with *Donna Anna*, and a countless host of injured virgins besides, doing penance in the humble occupation of apple-women, fish-wives, and sausage-fryers, in the purlieus of Billingsgate and Covent-garden, down to the period of his complete reformation, and being made an honest man of, by marrying into a sober English citizen's family, although infinitely pleasant in the exhibition, would be somewhat tedious in the recital: but something must be said of his representative.

We have seen Mrs. JORDAN in male characters, and more ladies besides than we would wish to recollect—but never any that so completely answered the purpose for which they were so transmuted, as the Lady who enacts the mock *Giovanni*. This part, as it is played at the Great House in the Haymarket (Shade of MOZART, and ye living admirers of AMBROGETTI, pardon the barbarity) had always something repulsive and distasteful to us.—We cannot sympathise with *Leporello's* brutal display of the *list*, and were shocked (no strait-laced moralists either) with the applauses, with the *endurance* we ought rather to say, which fashion and beauty bestowed upon that disgustful insult to feminine unhappiness. The *Leporello* of the Olympic Theatre is not of the most refined order, but we can bear with an English blackguard better than with the hard Italian. But *Giovanni*—free, fine, frank-spirited, single-hearted creature, turning all the mischief into fun as harmless as toys, or children's *make-believe*, what praise can we repay to you, adequate to the pleasure which you have given us? We had better be silent, for you have no name, and our mention will be but thought fantastical. You have taken out the sting from the evil thing, by what magic we know not, for there are actresses of greater mark and attribute than you. With you and your *Giovanni* our spirits will hold communion, whenever sorrow or suffering shall be our lot. We have seen your triumph

over the infernal powers; and pain, and Erebus, and the powers of darkness, are henceforth "shapes of a dream."

MISS KELLY AT BATH

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE "EXAMINER," FROM AN OLD CORRESPONDENT IN LONDON

"Dear G——,—I was thinking yesterday of our old play-going days; of your and my partiality to Mrs. Jordan, of our disputes as to the relative merits of Dodd and Parsons; and whether Smith or Jack Palmer were the most of a Gentleman. The occasion of my falling into this train of thinking was my learning from the Newspapers that Miss Kelly is paying the Bath Theatre a visit. (Your own theatre, I am sorry to find, is shut up, either from parsimonious feelings, or through the influence of —— principles.)[1] This lady has long ranked among the most considerable of our London performers. If there are one or two of greater name, I must impute it to the circumstance, that she has never burst upon the town at once in the maturity of her powers, which is a great advantage to debutantes, who have passed their probationary years in Provincial Theatres. We do not hear them tuning their instruments. But she has been winning her patient way from the humblest gradations to the eminence which she has now attained, on the self-same boards which supported her first in the slender pretensions of chorus singer. I very much wish you would go and see her. You will not see Mrs. Jordan, but something else; something on the whole very little, if at all, inferior to that lady, in her best days. I cannot hope that you will think so; I do not even wish that you should. Our longest remembrances are the most sacred; and I shall revere the prejudice, that shall prevent you from thinking quite so favourably of her as I do.—I do not well know how to draw a parallel between their distinct manners of acting. I seem to recognise the same pleasantness and nature in both: but Mrs. Jordan's was the carelessness of a child: her child-like spirit shook off the load of years from her spectators; she seemed one whom care could not come near; a privileged being, sent to teach mankind what it most wants, joyousness. Hence, if we had more unmixed pleasure from her performances, we had, perhaps, less sympathy with them than with those of her successor. This latter lady's is the joy of a

[1] The word here omitted by the Bristol Editor, we suppose, is Methodistical.

freed spirit, escaping from care, as a bird that had been limed; her smiles, if I may use the expression, seemed saved out of the fire, relics which a good and innocent heart had snatched up as most portable; her contents are visitors, not inmates: she can lay them by altogether; and when she does so, I am not sure that she is not greatest. She is, in truth, no ordinary tragedian. Her Varico is the most intense piece of acting which I ever witnessed, the most heart-rending spectacle. To see her leaning upon that wretched reed, her lover—the very exhibition of whose character would be a moral offence, but for her clinging and noble credulity—to see her lean upon that flint, and by the strong workings of passion imagine it a god—is one of the most afflicting lessons of the yearnings of the human heart and its sad mistakes, that was ever read upon a stage. The whole performance is everywhere *African*, fervid, glowing. Nor is this anything more than the wonderful force of imagination in this performer; for turn but the scene, and you shall have her come forward in some kindly home-drawn character of an English rustic, a Phœbe, or a Dinah Cropley, where you would swear that her thoughts had never strayed beyond the precincts of the dairy or the farm; or her mind known less tranquil passions than she might have learned among the flock, her out-of-door companions. See her again in parts of pure fun, such as the House-maid in the Merry Mourners, where the suspension of the broom in her hand, which she had been delightfully twirling, on unexpectedly encountering her sweetheart in the character of a fellow-servant, is quite equal to Mrs. Jordan's cordial inebriation in Nell.—I do not know whether I am not speaking it to her honour, that she does not succeed in what are called fine lady parts. Our friend C—— once observed, that no man of genius ever figured as a gentleman. Neither did any woman, gifted with Mrs. Jordan's or Miss Kelly's sensibilities, ever take upon herself to shine as a fine lady, the very essence of this character consisting in the entire repression of all genius and all feeling. To sustain a part of this kind to the life, a performer must be haunted by a perpetual self-reference; she must be always thinking of herself, and how she looks, and how she deports herself in the eyes of the spectators; whereas the delight of actresses of true feeling, and their chief power, is to elude the personal notice of an audience, to escape into their parts, and hide themselves under the hood of their assumed character. Their most graceful self-possession is in fact a self-forgetfulness; an oblivion alike of self and of

spectators. For this reason your most approved epilogue-speakers have been always ladies who have possessed least of this self-forgetting quality; and I think I have seen the amiable actress in question suffering some embarrassment, when she has had an address of the sort to deliver; when she found the modest veil of personation, which had half hid her from the audience, suddenly withdrawn, and herself brought without any such qualifying intervention before the public.

"I would apologise for the length of this letter, if I did not remember the lively interest you used to take in theatrical performers.

"I am, etc. etc.,

"* * * *"

Feb. 7, 1819.

"THE JOVIAL CREW"

The *Jovial Crew*, or the *Merry Beggars*, has been revived here [at the English Opera] after an interval, as the bills tell us, of seven years. Can it be so long (it seems but yesterday) since we saw poor LOVEGROVE in *Justice Clack*? His childish treble still pipes in our ears: "Whip 'em, whip 'em, whip 'em." DOWTON was the representative of the Justice the other night, and shook our ribs most incontinently. He was in "excellent fooling," and our lungs crowed chanticleer. Yet it appears to us, that there was a still higher strain of fatuity in his predecessor—that his eyes distilled a richer dotage. Perhaps after all it was an error of the memory. Defunct merit comes out upon us strangely.

Easy natural WRENCH was the *Springlove*; too comfortable a personage perhaps to personify *Springlove*, in whom the voice of the bird awakens a restless instinct of roaming that had slept during the winter. Miss STEVENSON certainly leaves us nothing to regret for the absence of the Lady, however agreeable, who formerly performed the part of *Meriel*. Miss STEVENSON is a fine open-countenanced lass, with glorious girlish manners. But the *Princess of Mumpers*, and *Lady Paramount*, of beggarly counterfeit accents, was *she* that played *Rachel*. Her gabbling lachrymose petitions; her tones, such as we have heard by the side of old woods, when an irresistible face has come peeping on one on a sudden; with her full black locks, and a *voice*—how shall we describe it?—a voice that was by nature meant to convey nothing but truth and goodness, but warped by circum-

stance into an assurance that she is telling us a lie—that catching twitch of the thievish irreproveable finger—those ballad-singers' notes, so vulgar, yet so unvulgar—that assurance, so like impudence, and yet so many countless leagues removed from it—her jeers, which we had rather stand, than be caressed with other ladies' compliments, a summer's day long—her face, with a wild out-of-doors grace upon it——

Altogether, a brace of more romantic she-beggars it was never our fortune to meet in this supplicatory world. The youngest might have sat for "pretty Bessy," whose father was an Earl, and whose legend still adorns the front of mine Hostess's doors at Bethnal-Green; and the other could be no less than the "Beggar Maid" whom "King Cophetua wooed." "What a lass that were," said a stranger who sate beside us, speaking of Miss KELLY in *Rachel*, "to go a-gipseying through the world with." We confess we longed to drop a tester in her lap, she begged so masterly.

By the way, this is the true *Beggar's Opera*. The other should have been called the *Mirror for Highwaymen*. We wonder the Societies for the Suppression of Mendicity (and other good things) do not club for the putting down of this infamous protest in favour of air, and clear liberty, and honest license, and blameless assertion of man's original blest charter of blue skies, and vagrancy, and nothing-to-do.

* * * *

July 4, 1819.

"THE HYPOCRITE"

By one of those perversities which actuate poor mortals in the place of motives (to persuade us into the notion that we are free agents, we presume), we had never till the other evening seen DOWTON [at the English Opera] in *Doctor Cantwell*. By a pious fraud of Mr. ARNOLD'S, who, by a process as simple as some of those by which MATHEWS metamorphoses his person, has converted the play into an opera,—a conversion, by the way, for which we are deeply indebted to him,—we have been favoured with this rich novelty at our favourite theatre. It seems a little unreasonable to come lagging in with a posthumous testimony to the merits of a performance of which the town has long rung, but we cannot help remarking in Mr. DOWTON'S acting, the subtil *gradations* of the hypocrisy; the length to which it runs in proportion as the recipient is capable

of taking it in; the gross palpable way in which he administers the dose in wholesale to old *Lady Lambert*, that rich fanatic; the somewhat more guarded manner in which he retails it out, only so much at a time as he can bear, to the somewhat less bitten fool her son; and the almost absence of it, before the younger members of the family, when nobody else is by: how the cloven foot peeps out a little and a little more, till the diabolical nature is stung out at last into full manifestation of its horrid self. What a grand insolence in the tone which he assumes, when he commands *Sir John* to quit *his* house! and then the tortures and agonies when he is finally baffled! It is in these last perhaps that he is greatest, and we should be doing injustice not to compare this part of the performance with, and in some respects to give it the preference above, the acting of Mr. KEAN in a situation nearly analogous, at the conclusion of the *City Madam*. *Cantwell* reveals his pangs with quite as much force, and without the assistance of those contortions which transform the detected *Luke* into the similitude of a mad tiger, or a foaming demon. DOWTON plays it neither like beast nor demon, but simply as it should be, a bold bad man pushed to extremity. Humanity is never once overstepped. Has it ever been noticed, the exquisite modulation with which he drawls out the word CHARLES, when he calls his secretary, so humble, so seraphic, so resigned? The most diabolical of her sex that we ever knew accented all her honey devil words in just such a hymn-like smoothness. The spirit of WHITFIELD seems hovering in the air, to suck the blessed tones, so much like his own upon earth: Lady HUNTINGDON claps her neat white wings, and gives it out again in heaven to the sainted ones, in approbation.

Miss KELLY is not quite at home in *Charlotte*; she is too good for such parts. Her cue is to be natural; she cannot put on the modes of artificial life, and play the coquet as it is expected to be played. There is a frankness in her tones which defeats her purposes; we could not help wondering why her lover (Mr. PEARMAN) looked so rueful; we forgot that she was acting airs and graces, as she seemed to forget it herself, turning them into a playfulness which could breed no doubt for a moment which way her inclinations ran. She is in truth not framed to tease or torment even in jest, but to utter a hearty *Yes* or *No*; to yield or refuse assent with a noble sincerity. We have not the pleasure of being acquainted with her, but we have been told that she carries the same cordial manners into private life.

We have heard, too, of some virtues which she is in the practice of; but they are of a description which repay themselves, and with them neither we nor the public have anything to do.

One word about WRENCH, who played the Colonel:—Was this man never unhappy? It seems as if care never came near him, as if the black ox could never tread upon his foot; we want something calamitous to befall him, to bring him down to us. It is a shame he should be suffered to go about with his well-looking happy face and tones, insulting us thin race of irritable and irritable-making critics.

Aug. 2, 1819.

NEW PIECES AT THE LYCEUM

A Plot has broke out at this theatre. Some quarrel has been breeding between the male and female performers, and the women have determined to set up for themselves. Seven of them, *Belles without Beaux* they call themselves, have undertaken to get up a piece without any assistance from the men, and in our opinion have established their point most successfully. There is Miss CAREW with her silvery tones, and Miss STEVENSON with her delicious mixture of the school-girl and the waiting-maid, and Miss KELLY, sure to be first in any mischief, and Mrs. CHATTERLY, with some of the best acting we have ever witnessed, and Miss LOVE, worthy of the *name*, and Mrs. GROVE that rhymes to her, and Mrs. RICHARDSON who might in charity have been allowed somewhat a larger portion of the dialogue. The effect was enchanting. We mean, for once. We do not want to encourage these Amazonian vanities. Once or twice we longed to have WRENCH bustling among them. A lady who sate near us was observed to gape for want of variety. To us it was delicate quintessence, an apple-pye made all of quinces. We remember poor HOLCROFT's last Comedy, which positively died from the opposite excess; it was choked up with men, and perished from a redundancy of male population. It had nine principal men characters in it, and but one woman, and she of no very ambiguous character. Mrs. HARLOW, to do the part justice, chose to play it in scarlet.

We did not know Mrs. CHATTERLY's merits before; she plays, with downright sterling good acting, a prude who is to be convinced out of her prudery by Miss KELLY's (we did not catch her stage-name) assumption of the dress and character of a brother of seventeen, who makes the prettiest unalarming

Platonic approaches; and in the shyest mask of moral battery, no one step of which you can detect, or say *this* is decidedly going too far, vanquishes at last the ice of her scruples, brings her into an infinite scrape, and then with her own infinite good humour sets all to right, and brings her safe out of it again with an explanation. Mrs. CHATTERLY'S embarrassments were masterly. Miss STEVENSON her maid's start, at surprising a youth in her mistress's closet at midnight, was quite as good. Miss KELLY we do not care to say anything about, because we have been accused of flattering her. The truth is, this lady puts so much intelligence and good sense into every part which she plays, that there is no expressing an honest sense of her merits, without incurring a suspicion of that sort. But what have we to gain by praising Miss KELLY?

Altogether this little feminine republic, this provoking experiment, went off most smoothly. What a nice world it would be, we sometimes think, *all women!* but then we are afraid we slip in a fallacy unawares into the hypothesis; we somehow edge in the idea of ourselves as spectators or something among them.

We saw WILKINSON after it in *Walk for a Wager*. What a picture of Forlorn Hope! of abject orphan destitution! he seems to have no friends in the world but his legs, and he plies them accordingly. He goes walking on like a perpetual motion. His continual ambulatory presence performs the part of a Greek chorus. He is the walking Gentleman of the piece; a Peripatetic that would make a Stoic laugh. He made us cry. His *Muffin-cap* in *Amateurs and Actors* is just such another piece of acting. We have seen charity boys, both of St. Clement's and Farringdon Without, looking just as old, ground down out of all semblance of youth, by abject and hopeless neglect—you cannot guess their age between fifteen and fifty. If Mr. PEAK is the author of these pieces, he has no reason to be piqued at their reception.

We must apologise for an oversight in our last week's article. The allusion made to Mr. KEAN'S acting of *Luke* in the *City Madam* was totally inapplicable to the part and to the play. We were thinking of his performance of the concluding scenes of the *New Way to Pay Old Debts*. We confounded one of MASSINGER'S strange heroes with the other. It was *Sir Giles Overreach* we meant; nor are we sure that our remark was just, even with this explanation. When we consider the intense tone, in which Mr. KEAN thinks it proper (and he is quite as likely to be in the right as his blundering critic) to pitch the

temperament of that monstrous character from the beginning, it follows but logically and naturally, that where the wild uncontrollable man comes to be baffled of his purpose, his passion should assume a frenzied manner, which it was altogether absurd to expect should be the same with the manner of the cautious and self-restraining *Cantwell*, even when he breaks loose from all bonds in the agony of his final exposure. We never felt more strongly the good sense of the saying,—comparisons are odious. They betray us not seldom into bitter errors of judgment; and sometimes, as in the present instance, into absolute matter of fact blunders. But we have recanted.

Aug. 1819. * * * *

MR. KEAN AS "HAMLET"

THEATRE DRURY LANE.

Hamlet was performed on Saturday. KEAN's personation of the Prince of Denmark attracted a smaller audience than is due to the actor's general reputation. The pit was full, but the boxes were thin. KEAN's vigour and animation are obviously thought injurious to the power of picturing the romantic and grieving spirit of *Hamlet*, and the character is certainly one of the last in which the peculiar merits of this popular actor can find their display. It would be idle to wander into a repetition of KEAN's peculiarities; they are familiar to the world. We are not sure that they are familiar to himself. He may have still to learn that the depth and solemnity of SHAKSPEARE's pathos, that grand and massive sensibility, which heaves the whole soul as the tide heaves the ocean, is denied to him, and on this he may reason to his choice of *Hamlet*. But the character has the diversity of nature, and it was impossible that the actor's eye, vivid as it is, hovering above it, should not find spots prominent and clear enough from the surrounding, forbidden extent, for him to descend upon and take possession. KEAN still upheld his reputation on his original points in the Play. He was impressive in the interview with the *Ghost*. His address to *Ophelia* was rather violent, yet with some happy touches of tenderness. His dialogue with the *Queen* was animated, and in some parts of its expression admirable. In his churchyard scene, he played as all before him have played, and we venture to think as all have played, wrong. He spoke with the sad deliberation that generally holds as the tone of talking in churchyards. He sermonised as all have done before him.

This appears to us as a result for which SHAKSPEARE had made no provision. Our impression of *Hamlet* is not the general one of his being a man of philosophy, oppressed at the crisis of the play, with extreme grief, and urged by it to determined, though suspended retribution. His characteristic seems to us simple sensibility, the deep power of excitement, as painfully vivid and as transient as the lightnings. Such a man finds sportiveness where others discover nothing but a summons to gravity. His sorrow is as wayward as his mirth; he lives in a world of imagination; his projects have but little of the solid and consecutive architecture of the earth; his castles are of the clouds, and he sees shapes forming into pomp and beauty, and rejoices; or melting away and grieves; where the general eye sees nothing but the measureless rolling of vapours. This humourist treads on the verge of insanity, and is preserved from it only by the infinite variety of his excitements. Where one impression masters all the rest, such a man is at once mad, and sees "more devils than vast hell can hold."

THE OLD ACTORS

I DO not know a more mortifying thing than to be conscious of a foregone delight, with a total oblivion of the person and manner which conveyed it. In dreams I often stretch and strain after the countenance of Edwin, whom I once saw in Peeping Tom. I cannot catch a feature of him. He is no more to me than Nokes or Pinkethman. Parsons, and still more Dodd, were near being lost to me till I was refreshed with their portraits (fine treat) the other day at Mr. Mathew's gallery at Highgate; which, with the exception of the Hogarth pictures, a few years since exhibited in Pall Mall, was the most delightful collection I ever gained admission to. There hang the players, in their single persons and in grouped scenes, from the Restoration,—Bettertons, Booths, Garricks, justifying the prejudices which we entertain for them—the Bracegirdles, the Mountforts, and the Oldfields, fresh as Cibber has described them—the Woffington (a true Hogarth) upon a couch, dallying and dangerous—the screen scene in Brinsley's famous comedy, with Smith and Mrs. Abingdon whom I have not seen, and the rest, whom having seen, I see still there. There is Henderson, unrivalled in Comus, whom I saw at second hand in the elderly

Harley—Harley, the rival of Holman, in Horatio—Holman, with the bright glittering teeth in Lothario, and the deep paviour's sighs in Romeo—the jolliest person ("our son is fat") of any Hamlet I have yet seen, with the most laudable attempts (for a personable man) at looking melancholy—and Pope, the abdicated monarch of tragedy and comedy, in Harry the Eighth and Lord Townley. There hang the two Aickins, brethren in mediocrity; Wroughton, who in Kitely seemed to have forgotten that in prouder days he had personated Alexander—the specious form of John Palmer, with the special effrontery of Bobby—Bensley, with the trumpet-tongue, and little Quick (the retired Dioclesian of Islington) with his squeak like a Bart'lemew fiddle. There are fixed, cold as in life, the immovable features of Moody, who, afraid of o'erstepping nature, sometimes stopped short of her—and the restless fidgetiness of Lewis, who, with no such fears, not seldom leaped o' the other side. There hang Farren and Whitfield, and Burton and Phillimore, names of small account in those times, but which, remembered now, or casually recalled by the sight of an old play-bill, with their associated recordations, can "drown an eye unused to flow." There too hangs (not far removed from them in death) the graceful plainness of the first Mrs. Pope, with a voice unstrung by age, but which, in her better days, must have competed with the silver tones of Barry himself, so enchanting in decay do I remember it—of all her lady parts exceeding herself in the Lady Quakeress (there earth touched heaven!) of O'Keefe, when she played it to the "merry cousin" of Lewis—and Mrs. Mattocks, the sensiblest of viragos—and Miss Pope, a gentlewoman ever, to the verge of ungentility, with Churchill's compliment still burnishing upon her gay Honeycomb lips. There are the two Bannisters, and Sedgwick, and Kelly, and Dignum (Diggy) and the by-gone features of Mrs. Ward, matchless in Lady Loverule; and the collective majesty of the whole Kemble family, and (Shakspeare's woman) Dora Jordan; and, by her, *two Antics*, who in former and in latter days have chiefly beguiled us of our griefs; whose portraits we shall strive to recall, for the sympathy of those who may not have had the benefit of viewing the matchless Highgate Collection.

JOHN KEMBLE, AND GODWIN'S TRAGEDY OF "ANTONIO"

The story of his swallowing opium-pills to keep him lively upon the first night of a certain tragedy, we may presume to be a piece of retaliatory pleasantry on the part of the suffering author. But, indeed, John had the art of diffusing a complacent equable dulness (which you knew not where to quarrel with) over a piece which he did not like, beyond any of his contemporaries. John Kemble had made up his mind early, that all the good tragedies, which could be written, had been written; and he resented any new attempt. His shelves were full. The old standards were scope enough for his ambition. He ranged in them absolute—and "fair in Otway, full in Shakspeare shone." He succeeded to the old lawful thrones, and did not care to adventure bottomry with a Sir Edward Mortimer, or any casual speculator that offered. I remember, too acutely for my peace, the deadly extinguisher which he put upon my friend G.'s "Antonio." G., satiate with visions of political justice, (possibly not to be realised in our time), or willing to let the sceptical worldlings see, that his anticipations of the future did not preclude a warm sympathy for men as they are and have been—wrote a tragedy. He chose a story, affecting, romantic, Spanish—the plot simple, without being naked—the incidents uncommon, without being overstrained. Antonio, who gives the name to the piece, is a sensitive young Castilian, who, in a fit of his country honour, immolates his sister—

But I must not anticipate the catastrophe—the play, reader, is extant in choice English—and you will employ a spare half-crown not injudiciously in the quest of it.

The conception was bold, and the dénouement—the time and place in which the hero of it existed, considered—not much out of keeping; yet it must be confessed, that it required a delicacy of handling both from the author and the performer, so as not much to shock the prejudices of a modern English audience. G., in my opinion, has done his part.

John, who was in familiar habits with the philosopher, had undertaken to play Antonio. Great expectations were formed. A philosopher's first play was a new era. The night arrived. I was favoured with a seat in an advantageous box, between the author and his friend M——. G. sat cheerful and confident.

In his friend M.'s looks, who had perused the manuscript, I read some terror. Antonio in the person of John Philip Kemble at length appeared, starched out in a ruff which no one could dispute, and in most irreproachable mustachios. John always dressed most provokingly correct on these occasions. The first act swept by solemn and silent. It went off, as G. assured M., exactly as the opening act of a piece—the protasis—should do. The cue of the spectators was to be mute. The characters were but in their introduction. The passions and the incidents would be developed hereafter. Applause hitherto would be impertinent. Silent attention was the effect all-desirable. Poor M. acquiesced—but in his honest friendly face I could discern a working which told how much more acceptable the plaudit of a single hand (however misplaced) would have been than all this reasoning. The second act (as in duty bound) rose a little in interest; but still John kept his forces under—in policy, as G. would have it—and the audience were most complacently attentive. The protasis, in fact, was scarcely unfolded. The interest would warm in the next act, against which a special incident was provided. M. wiped his cheek, flushed with a friendly perspiration—'tis M.'s way of showing his zeal—"from every pore of him a perfume falls"—I honour it above Alexander's. He had once or twice during this act joined his palms in a feeble endeavour to elicit a sound—they emitted a solitary noise without an echo—there was no deep to answer to his deep. G. repeatedly begged him to be quiet. The third act at length brought on the scene which was to warm the piece progressively to the final flaming forth of the catastrophe. A philosophic calm settled upon the clear brow of G. as it approached. The lips of M. quivered. A challenge was held forth upon the stage, and there was a promise of a fight. The pit roused themselves on this extraordinary occasion, and, as their manner is, seemed disposed to make a ring,—when suddenly Antonio, who was the challenged, turning the tables upon the hot challenger, Don Gusman (who by the way should have had his sister) baulks his humour, and the pit's reasonable expectation at the same time, with some speeches out of the new philosophy against duelling. The audience were here fairly caught—their courage was up, and on the alert—a few blows, *ding, dong*, as R——s the dramatist afterwards expressed it to me, might have done the business — when their most exquisite moral sense was suddenly called in to assist in the mortifying negation of their own pleasure. They could not applaud, for disappointment;

they would not condemn, for morality's sake. The interest stood stone still; and John's manner was not at all calculated to unpetrify it. It was Christmas time, and the atmosphere furnished some pretext for asthmatic affections. One began to cough—his neighbour sympathised with him—till a cough became epidemical. But when, from being half artificial in the pit, the cough got frightfully naturalised among the fictitious persons of the drama; and Antonio himself (albeit it was not set down in the stage directions) seemed more intent upon relieving his own lungs than the distresses of the author and his friends, —then G. "first knew fear"; and mildly turning to M., intimated that he had not been aware that Mr. K. laboured under a cold; and that the performance might possibly have been postponed with advantage for some nights further—still keeping the same serene countenance, while M. sweat like a bull. It would be invidious to pursue the fates of this ill-starred evening. In vain did the plot thicken in the scenes that followed, in vain the dialogue wax more passionate and stirring, and the progress of the sentiment point more and more clearly to the arduous development which impended. In vain the action was accelerated, while the acting stood still. From the beginning, John had taken his stand; had wound himself up to an even tenor of stately declamation, from which no exigence of dialogue or person could make him swerve for an instant. To dream of his rising with the scene (the common trick of tragedians) was preposterous; for from the onset he had planted himself, as upon a terrace, on an eminence vastly above the audience, and he kept that sublime level to the end. He looked from his throne of elevated sentiment upon the under-world of spectators with a most sovran and becoming contempt. There was excellent pathos delivered out to them: an they would receive it, so; an they would not receive it, so. There was no offence against decorum in all this; nothing to condemn, to damn. Not an irreverent symptom of a sound was to be heard. The procession of verbiage stalked on through four and five acts, no one venturing to predict what would come of it, when towards the winding up of the latter, Antonio, with an irrelevancy that seemed to stagger Elvira herself—for she had been coolly arguing the point of honour with him—suddenly whips out a poniard, and stabs his sister to the heart. The effect was, as if a murder had been committed in cold blood. The whole house rose up in clamorous indignation demanding justice. The feeling rose far above hisses. I believe at that instant, if

JOHN QUICK AS DON LEWIS

Engraved by Condé
after the painting by De Wilde.

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they could have got him, they would have torn the unfortunate author to pieces. Not that the act itself was so exorbitant, or of a complexion different from what they themselves would have applauded upon another occasion in a Brutus, or an Appius—but for want of attending to Antonio's *words*, which palpably led to the expectation of no less dire an event, instead of being seduced by his *manner*, which seemed to promise a sleep of a less alarming nature than it was his cue to inflict upon Elvira, they found themselves betrayed into an accomplice-ship of murder, a perfect misprision of parricide, while they dreamed of nothing less. M., I believe, was the only person who suffered acutely from the failure; for G. thenceforward, with a serenity unattainable but by the true philosophy, abandoning a precarious popularity, retired into his fast hold of speculation,—the drama in which the world was to be his tiring room, and remote posterity his applauding spectators at once, and actors.

ON A PASSAGE IN "THE TEMPEST"

As long as I can remember the play of The Tempest, one passage in it has always set me upon wondering. It has puzzled me beyond measure. In vain I strove to find the meaning of it. I seemed doomed to cherish infinite hopeless curiosity.

It is where Prospero, relating the banishment of Sycorax from Argier, adds—

> ——for one thing that she did
> They would not take her life—

how have I pondered over this, when a boy! how have I longed for some authentic memoir of the witch to clear up the obscurity! —Was the story extant in the Chronicles of Algiers? Could I get at it by some fortunate introduction to the Algerine ambassador? Was a voyage thither practicable? The Spectator (I knew) went to Grand Cairo, only to measure a pyramid. Was not the object of my quest of at least as much importance? The blue-eyed hag—could *she* have done anything good or meritorious? might that Succubus relent? then might there be hope for the devil. I have often admired since, that none of the commentators have boggled at this passage—how they could swallow this camel—such a tantalising piece of obscurity, such an abortion of an anecdote.

At length I think I have lighted upon a clue, which may lead to show what was passing in the mind of Shakspeare, when he dropped this imperfect rumour. In the "accurate description of Africa, by John Ogilby (Folio) 1670," page 230, I find written, as follows. The marginal title to the narrative is—

Charles the Fifth besieges Algier

In the last place, we will briefly give an account of the Emperour Charles the Fifth, when he besieg'd this city; and of the great loss he suffer'd therein.

This Prince in the year one thousand five hundred forty one, having embarqued upon the sea an army of twenty two thousand men aboard eighteen gallies, and an hundred tall ships, not counting the barques and shallops, and other small boats, in which he had engaged the principal of the Spanish and Italian nobility, with a good number of the knights of Maltha; he was to land on the coast of Barbary, at a cape call'd Matifou. From this place unto the city of Algier a flat shore or strand extends itself for about four leagues, the which is exceeding favourable to gallies. There he put ashore with his army, and in a few days caused a fortress to be built, which unto this day is call'd the Castle of the Emperour.

In the mean time the city of Algier took the alarm, having in it at that time but eight hundred Turks, and six thousand Moors, poor-spirited men, and unexercised in martial affairs; besides it was at that time fortifi'd onely with walls, and had no out-works: insomuch that by reason of its weakness, and the great forces of the Emperour, it could not in appearance escape taking. In fine, it was attaqued with such order, that the army came up to the very gates, where the Chevalier de Sauignac, a Frenchman by nation, made himself remarkable above all the rest, by the miracles of his valour. For having repulsed the Turks, who having made a sally at the gate call'd Babason, and there desiring to enter along with them, when he saw that they shut the gate upon him, he ran his ponyard into the same, and left it sticking deep therein. They next fell to battering the city by the force of cannon; which the assailants so weakened, that in that great extremity the defendants lost their courage, and resolved to surrender.

But as they were thus intending, there was a witch of the town, whom the history doth not name, which went to seek out Assam Aga, that commanded within, and pray'd him to make it good yet nine days longer, with assurance, that within that time he should infallibly see Algier delivered from that siege, and the whole army of the enemy dispersed, so that Christians should be as cheap as Birds. In a word, the thing did happen in the manner as foretold; for upon the twenty-first day of October in the same year, there fell a continual rain upon the land, and so furious a storm at sea, that one might have seen ships hoisted into the clouds, and in one instant again precipitated into the bottom of the water: insomuch that that same dreadful tempest was followed with the loss of fifteen gallies, and above an hundred other vessels; which was the cause why the Emperour, seeing his army wasted by the bad weather,

pursued by a famine, occasioned by wrack of his ships, in which was the greatest part of his victuals and ammunition, he was constrain'd to raise the siege, and set sail for Sicily, whither he retreated with the miserable reliques of his fleet.

In the mean time that witch being acknowledged the deliverer of Algier, was richly remunerated, and the credit of her charms authorised. So that ever since witchcraft hath been very freely tolerated; of which the Chief of the town, and even those who are esteem'd to be of greatest sanctity among them, such as are the Maribou's, a religious order of their sect, do for the most part make profession of it, under a goodly pretext of certain revelations which they say they have had from their prophet Mahomet.

And hereupon those of Algier, to palliate the shame and the reproaches that are thrown upon them for making use of a witch in the danger of this siege, do say that the loss of the forces of Charles V., was caused by a prayer of one of their Maribou's, named Cidy Utica, which was at that time in great credit, not under the notion of a magitian, but for a person of a holy life. Afterwards in remembrance of their success, they have erected unto him a small mosque without the Babason gate, where he is buried, and in which they keep sundry lamps burning in honour of him; nay they sometimes repair thither to make their *sala*, for a testimony of greater veneration.

Can it be doubted for a moment, that the dramatist had come fresh from reading some *older narrative* of this deliverance of Algier by a witch, and transferred the merit of the deed to his Sycorax, exchanging only the "rich remuneration," which did not suit his purpose, to the simple pardon of her life? Ogilby wrote in 1670; but the authorities to which he refers for his account of Barbary are—Johannes de Leo, or Africanus—Louis Marmol—Diego de Haedo—Johannes Gramaye—Bræves—Cel. Curio—and Diego de Torres—names totally unknown to me—and to which I beg leave to refer the curious reader for his fuller satisfaction.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR OF MR. LISTON

The subject of our memoir is lineally descended from Johan de L'Estonne, (see Doomsday Book, where he is so written) who came in with the Conqueror, and had lands awarded him at Lupton Magna, in Kent. His particular merits or services, Fabian, whose authority I chiefly follow, has forgotten or perhaps thought it immaterial, to specify. Fuller thinks that he was standard-bearer to Hugo de Agmondesham, a powerful Norman baron, who was slain by the hand of Harold himself

at the fatal battle of Hastings. Be this as it may, we find a family of that name flourishing some centuries later in that county. John Delliston, Knight, was high sheriff for Kent, according to Fabian, *quinto Henrici sexti*; and we trace the lineal branch flourishing downwards—the orthography varying, according to the unsettled usage of the times, from Delleston to Leston, or Liston, between which it seems to have alternated, till, in the latter end of the reign of James I., it finally settled into the determinate and pleasing dissyllabic arrangement which it still retains. Aminadab Liston, the eldest male representative of the family of that day, was of the strictest order of Puritans. Mr. Foss, of Pall Mall, has obligingly communicated to me an undoubted tract of his, which bears the initials only, A. L. and is entitled, "The Grinning Glass: or Actor's Mirrour, where in the vituperative Visnomy of Vicious Players for the Scene is as virtuously reflected back upon their mimetic Monstrosities as it has viciously (hitherto) vitiated with its vile Vanities her Votarists." A strange title, but bearing the impress of those absurdities with which the title pages of that pamphlet-spawning age abounded. The work bears date 1617. It preceded the Histriomastix by fifteen years; and as it went before it in time, so it comes not far short of it in virulence. It is amusing to find an ancestor of Liston's thus bespattering the players at the commencement of the seventeenth century. "Thinketh He (the actor), with his costive countenances, to wry a sorrowing soul out of her anguish, or by defacing the divine denotement of destinate dignity (daignely described in the face humane and no other) to reinstamp the Paradice-plotted similitude with a novel and naughty approximation (not in the first intention) to those abhorred and ugly God-forbidden correspondences, with flouting Apes' jeering gibberings, and Babion babbling-like, to hoot out of countenance all modest measure, as if our sins were not sufficing to stoop our backs without He wresting and crooking his members to mistimed mirth (rather malice) in deformed fashion, leering when he should learn, prating for praying, goggling his eyes, (better upturned for grace), whereas in Paradice (if we can go thus high for His profession) that devilish Serpent appeareth his undoubted Predecessor, first induing a mask like some roguish roistering Roscius (I spit at them all) to beguile with Stage shows the gaping Woman, whose Sex hath still chiefly upheld these Mysteries, and are voiced to be the chief Stage-haunters, where, as I am told, the custom is commonly to mumble (between

JOHN LISTON

Engraved by Cook
after the painting by J. Jackson.

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acts) apples, not ambiguously derived from that pernicious Pippin (worse in effect than the Apples of Discord) whereas sometimes the hissing sounds of displeasure, as I hear, do lively reintonate that snake-taking-leave, and diabolical goings off, in Paradice."

The puritanic effervescence of the early Presbyterians appears to have abated with time, and the opinions of the more immediate ancestors of our subject to have subsided at length into a strain of moderate Calvinism. Still a tincture of the old leaven was to be expected among the posterity of A. L.

Our hero was an only son of Habakkuk Liston, settled as an Anabaptist minister upon the patrimonial soil of his ancestors. A regular certificate appears, thus entered in the church book at Lupton Magna: "*Johannes, filius Habakkuk et Rebeccæ Liston, Dissentientium, natus quinto Decembri* 1780, *baptizatus sexto Februarii sequentis; Sponsoribus J. et W. Woollaston, unâ cum Maria Merryweather.*" The singularity of an Anabaptist minister conforming to the child rites of the church would have tempted me to doubt the authenticity of this entry, had I not been obliged with the actual sight of it, by the favour of Mr. Minns, the intelligent and worthy parish clerk of Lupton. Possibly some expectation in point of worldly advantages from some of the sponsors, might have induced this unseemly deviation, as it must have appeared, from the practice and principles of that generally rigid sect. The term *Dissentientium* was possibly intended by the orthodox clergyman as a slur upon the supposed inconsistency. What, or of what nature, the expectations we have hinted at, may have been, we have now no means of ascertaining. Of the Woollastons no trace is now discoverable in the village. The name of Merryweather occurs over the front of a grocer's shop at the western extremity of Lupton.

Of the infant Liston we find no events recorded before his fourth year, in which a severe attack of the measles bid fair to have robbed the rising generation of a fund of innocent entertainment. He had it of the confluent kind, as it is called, and the child's life was for a week or two despaired of. His recovery he always attributes (under Heaven) to the humane interference of one Doctor Wilhelm Richter, a German empiric, who, in this extremity, prescribed a copious diet of *Saur Kraut*, which the child was observed to reach at with avidity, when other food repelled him; and from this change of diet his restoration was

rapid and complete. We have often heard him name the circumstance with gratitude; and it is not altogether surprising, that a relish for this kind of aliment, so abhorrent and harsh to common English palates, has accompanied him through life. When any of Mr. Liston's intimates invite him to supper, he never fails of finding, nearest to his knife and fork, a dish of *Saur Kraut.*

At the age of nine we find our subject under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. Goodenough (his father's health not permitting him probably to instruct him himself), by whom he was inducted into a competent portion of Latin and Greek, with some mathematics, till the death of Mr. Goodenough, in his own seventieth and Master Liston's eleventh year, put a stop for the present to his classical progress.

We have heard our hero with emotions, which do his heart honour, describe the awful circumstances attending the decease of this worthy old gentleman. It seems they had been walking out together, master and pupil, in a fine sunset, to the distance of three-quarters of a mile west of Lupton, when a sudden curiosity took Mr. Goodenough to look down upon a chasm, where a shaft had been lately sunk in a mining speculation (then projecting, but abandoned soon after, as not answering the promised success, by Sir Ralph Shepperton, Knight, and member for the county). The old clergyman leaning over, either with incaution, or sudden giddiness, (probably a mixture of both,) suddenly lost his footing, and, to use Mr. Liston's phrase, disappeared; and was doubtless broken into a thousand pieces. The sound of his head, etc. dashing successively upon the projecting masses of the chasm, had such an effect upon the child, that a serious sickness ensued, and even for many years after his recovery he was not once seen so much as to smile.

The joint death of both his parents, which happened not many months after this disastrous accident, and was probably (one or both of them) accelerated by it, threw our youth upon the protection of his maternal great aunt, Mrs. Sittingbourn. Of this aunt we have never heard him speak but with expressions amounting almost to reverence. To the influence of her early counsels and manners, he has always attributed the firmness with which, in maturer years, thrown upon a way of life, commonly not the best adapted to gravity and self-retirement, he has been able to maintain a serious character, untinctured with the levities incident to his profession. Ann Sittingbourn (we have seen her portrait by Hudson) was stately, stiff, tall,

with a cast of features strikingly resembling the subject of this memoir. Her estate in Kent was spacious and well wooded; the house, one of those venerable old mansions which are so impressive in childhood, and so hardly forgotten in succeeding years. In the venerable solitudes of Charnwood, among thick shades of the oak and beech (this last his favourite tree), the young Liston cultivated those contemplative habits which have never entirely deserted him in after years. Here he was commonly in the summer months to be met with, with a book in his hand—not a play-book—meditating. Boyle's Reflections was at one time the darling volume, which in its turn was superseded by Young's Night Thoughts, which has continued its hold upon him through life. He carries it always about with him; and it is no uncommon thing for him to be seen, in the refreshing intervals of his occupation, leaning against a side scene, in a sort of Herbert of Cherbury posture, turning over a pocket edition of his favourite author.

But the solitudes of Charnwood were not destined always to obscure the path of our young hero. The premature death of Mrs. Sittingbourn, at the age of 70, occasioned by the incautious burning of a pot of charcoal in her sleeping chamber, left him in his 19th year nearly without resources. That the stage at all should have presented itself as an eligible scope for his talents, and, in particular, that he should have chosen a line so foreign to what appears to have been his turn of mind, may require some explanation.

At Charnwood then we behold him thoughtful, grave, ascetic. From his cradle averse to flesh meats and strong drink; abstemious even beyond the genius of the place; and almost in spite of the remonstrances of his great aunt, who, though strict, was not rigid; water was his habitual drink, and his food little beyond the mast, and beechnuts, of his favourite groves. It is a medical fact, that this kind of diet, however favourable to the contemplative powers of the primitive hermits, etc., is but ill adapted to the less robust minds and bodies of a later generation. Hypochondria almost constantly ensues. It was so in the case of the young Liston. He was subject to sights, and had visions. Those arid beechnuts, distilled by a complexion naturally adust, mounted into an occiput, already prepared to kindle by long seclusion, and the fervour of strict Calvinistic notions. In the glooms of Charnwood he was assailed by illusions, similar in kind to those which are related of the famous Anthony of Padua. Wild antic faces would ever

when he was about to meet for the first time the sympathies of a London audience. The particulars of his success since have been too much before our eyes to render a circumstantial detail of them expedient. I shall only mention that Mr. Willoughby, his resentments having had time to subside, is at present one of the fastest friends of his old renegado factor; and that Mr. Liston's hopes of Miss Parker vanishing along with his unsuccessful suit to Melpomene, in the autumn of 1811 he married his present lady, by whom he has been blessed with one son, Philip; and two daughters, Ann, and Augustina.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MR. MUNDEN

IN A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Hark'ee, Mr. Editor! A word in your ear. They tell me you are going to put me in print—in print, Sir. To publish my life. What is my life to you, Sir? What is it to you whether I ever lived at all? My life is a very good life, Sir. I am insured at the Pelican, Sir. I am threescore years and six—six; mark me, Sir: but I can play Polonius, which, I believe, few of your corre—correspondents can do, Sir. I suspect tricks, Sir: I smell a rat; I do, I do. You would cog the die upon us; you would, you would, Sir. But I will forestall you, Sir. You would be deriving me from William the Conqueror, with a murrain to you. It is no such thing, Sir. The town shall know better, Sir. They begin to smoke your flams, Sir. Mr. Liston may be born where he pleases, Sir: but I will not be born at Lup—Lupton Magna, for anybody's pleasure, Sir. My son and I have looked over the great map of Kent together, and we can find no such place as you would palm upon us, Sir; palm upon us, I say. Neither Magna nor Parva, as my son says, and he knows Latin, Sir; Latin. If you write my life true, Sir, you must set down, that I, Joseph Munden, comedian, came into the world upon All-hallows' day, Anno Domini 1759—1759; no sooner nor later, Sir: and I saw the first light—the first light, remember, Sir, at Stoke Pogis—Stoke Pogis, comitatu Bucks, and not at Lup—Lup Magna, which I believe to be no better than moonshine—moonshine; do you mark me, Sir? I wonder you can put such flim flams upon us, Sir; I do, I do. It does not not become you, Sir; I say it—I say it. And my father was an honest tradesman, Sir: he dealt in malt and hops, Sir, and was

a Corporation man, Sir, and of the Church of England, Sir, and no Presbyterian; nor Ana—Anabaptist, Sir, however you may be disposed to make honest people believe to the contrary, Sir. Your bams are found out, Sir. The town will be your stale puts no longer, Sir; and you must not send us jolly fellows, Sir—we that are comedians, Sir,—you must not send us into groves and Charn—Charnwoods, a moping, Sir. Neither Charns, nor charnel houses, Sir. It is not our constitutions, Sir. I tell it you—I tell it you. I was a droll dog from my cradle. I came into the world tittering, and the midwife tittered, and the gossips spilt their caudle with tittering. And when I was brought to the font, the parson could not christen me for tittering. So I was never more than half baptised. And when I was little Joey, I made 'em all titter;—there was not a melancholy face to be seen in Pogis. Pure nature, Sir. I was born a comedian. Old Screw-up, the undertaker, could tell you, Sir, if he were living. Why, I was obliged to be locked up every time there was to be a funeral at Pogis. I was—I was, Sir. I used to *grimace* at the mutes, as he called it, and put 'em out with my mops and mows, till they couldn't stand at a door for me. And when I was locked up, with nothing but a cat in my company, I followed my bent with trying to make her laugh, and sometimes she would, and sometimes she would not. And my schoolmaster could make nothing of me: I had only to thrust my tongue in my cheek—in my cheek, Sir, and the rod dropped from his fingers: and so my education was limited, Sir. And I grew up a young fellow, and it was thought convenient to enter me upon some course of life that should make me serious; but it wouldn't do, Sir. And I was articled to a drysalter. My father gave forty pounds premium with me, Sir. I can show the indent—dent—dentures, Sir. But I was born to be a comedian, Sir: so I ran away, and listed with the players, Sir; and I topt my parts at Amersham and Gerrard's Cross, and played my own father to his face, in his own town of Pogis, in the part of Gripe, when I was not full seventeen years of age, and he did not know me again, but he knew me afterwards; and then he laughed, and I laughed, and, what is better, the drysalter laughed, and gave me up my articles for the joke's sake: so that I came into court afterwards with clean hands—with clean hands—do you see, Sir?

[Here the manuscript becomes illegible for two or three sheets onwards, which we presume to be occasioned by the absence of Mr. Munden, jun. who clearly transcribed it for the press thus far. The rest (with the exception of the concluding paragraph,

which seemingly is resumed in the first handwriting) appears to contain a confused account of some lawsuit, in which the elder Munden was engaged; with a circumstantial history of the proceedings on a case of Breach of Promise of Marriage, made to or by (we cannot pick out which) Jemima Munden, spinster, probably the comedian's cousin, for it does not appear he had any sister; with a few dates, rather better preserved, of this great actor's engagements—as "Cheltenham (spelt Cheltnam) 1776)"; "Bath, 1779"; "London 1789"; together with strange anecdotes of Messrs. Edwin, Wilson, Lee Lewis, etc. over which we have strained our eyes to no purpose, in the hope of presenting something amusing to the public. Towards the end the manuscript brightens up a little, as we have said, and concludes in the following manner.]

—— stood before them for six and thirty years, [we suspect that Mr. Munden is here speaking of his final leave-taking of the stage] and to be dismissed at last. But I was heart-whole, heart-whole to the last, Sir. What though a few drops did course themselves down the old veteran's cheeks; who could help it, Sir? I was a giant that night, Sir; and could have played fifty parts, each as arduous as Dozy. My faculties were never better, Sir. But I was to be laid upon the shelf. It did not suit the public to laugh with their old servant any longer, Sir. [Here some moisture has blotted a sentence or two.] But I can play Polonius still, Sir; I can, I can.

Your servant, Sir,

JOSEPH MUNDEN.

ON THE RELIGION OF ACTORS

THE world has hitherto so little troubled its head with the points of doctrine held by a community, which contributes in other ways so largely to its amusement, that, before the late mischance of a celebrated tragic actor, it scarce condescended to look into the practice of any individual player, much less to inquire into the hidden and abscondite springs of his actions. Indeed it is with some violence to the imagination that we conceive of an actor as belonging to the relations of private life, so closely do we identify these persons in our mind with the characters which they assume upon the stage. How oddly does it sound, when we are told that the late Miss Pope, for instance—that is to say, in our notion of her, *Mrs. Candour*—

JOSEPH MUNDEN
IN "LOCK & KEY"

Engraved by Lupton
after the painting by G. Clint.

See p. 233

was a good daughter, an affectionate sister, and exemplary in all parts of domestic life! With still greater difficulty can we carry our notions to church, and conceive of Liston, kneeling upon a hassock; or Munden uttering a pious ejaculation, "making mouths at the invisible event." But the times are fast improving; and, if the process of sanctity begun under the happy auspices of the present licenser go on to its completion, it will be as necessary for a comedian to give an account of his faith, as of his conduct. Fawcett must study the five points; and Dicky Suett, if he were alive, would have had to rub up his catechism. Already the effects of it begin to appear. A celebrated performer has thought fit to oblige the world with a confession of his faith; or, BR——'S RELIGIO DRAMATICI. This gentleman, in his laudable attempt to shift from his person the obloquy of Judaism, with the forwardness of a new convert, in trying to prove too much, has, in the opinion of many, proved too little. A simple declaration of his Christianity was sufficient; but, strange to say, his apology has not a word about it. We are left to gather it from some expressions which imply that he is a Protestant; but we did not wish to inquire into the niceties of his orthodoxy. To his friends of the *old persuasion* the distinction was impertinent; for what cares Rabbi Ben Kimchi for the differences which have split our novelty? To the great body of Christians that hold the Pope's supremacy —that is to say, to the major part of the Christian world—his religion will appear as much to seek as ever. But perhaps he conceived that all Christians are Protestants, as children and the common people call all that are not animals, Christians. The mistake was not very considerable in so young a proselyte, or he might think the general (as logicians speak) involved in the particular. All Protestants are Christians; but I am a Protestant; *ergo*, etc. as if a marmoset, contending to be a man, overleaping that term as too generic and vulgar, should at once roundly proclaim himself to be a gentleman. The argument would be, as we say, *ex abundanti*. From whichever cause this *excessus in terminis* proceeded, we can do no less than congratulate the general state of Christendom upon the accession of so extraordinary a convert. Who was the happy instrument of the conversion, we are yet to learn: it comes nearest to the attempt of the late pious Doctor Watts to christianise the Psalms of the Old Testament. Something of the old Hebrew raciness is lost in the transfusion; but much of its asperity is softened and pared down in the adaptation. The

appearance of so singular a treatise at this conjuncture has set us upon an inquiry into the present state of religion upon the stage generally. By the favour of the churchwardens of Saint Martin's in the Fields, and Saint Paul's Covent Garden, who have very readily, and with great kindness, assisted our pursuit, we are enabled to lay before the public the following particulars. —Strictly speaking, neither of the two great bodies is collectively a religious institution. We had expected to have found a chaplain among them, as at Saint Stephen's, and other court establishments; and were the more surprised at the omission, as the last Mr. Bengough, at the one house, and Mr. Powell at the other, from a gravity of speech and demeanour, and the habit of wearing black at their first appearances in the beginning of *fifth*, or the conclusion of *fourth acts*, so eminently pointed out their qualifications for such office. These corporations then being not properly congregational, we must seek the solution of our question in the tastes, attainments, accidental breeding, and education of the individual members of them. As we were prepared to expect, a majority at both houses adhere to the religion of the church established,—only that at one of them a pretty strong leaven of Catholicism is suspected: which, considering the notorious education of the manager at a foreign seminary, is not so much to be wondered at. Some have gone so far as to report that Mr. T——y, in particular, belongs to an order lately restored on the Continent. We can contradict this: that gentleman is a member of the Kirk of Scotland; and his name is to be found, much to his honour, in the list of Seceders from the congregation of Mr. Fletcher. While the generality, as we have said, are content to jog on in the safe trammels of national orthodoxy, symptoms of a sectarian spirit have broken out in quarters where we should least have looked for it. Some of the ladies at both houses are deep in controverted points. Miss F——e, we are credibly informed, is a *sub*, and Madame V—— a *supra*-lapsarian.

Mr. Pope is the last of the exploded sect of the Ranters. Mr. Sinclair has joined the Shakers. Mr. Grimaldi, Senior, after being long a Jumper, has lately fallen into some whimsical theories respecting the Fall of Man; which he understands, not of an allegorical, but a *real tumble*, by which the whole body of humanity became, as it were, lame to the performance of good works. Pride he will have to be—nothing but a stiff-neck; irresolution—the nerves shaken; an inclination to sinister paths —crookedness of the joints; spiritual deadness—a paralysis;

want of charity—a contraction in the fingers; despising of government, a broken head; the plaister—a sermon; the lint to bind it up—the text; the probers—the preachers; a pair of crutches—the old and new law; a bandage—religious obligation: a fanciful mode of illustration derived from the accidents and habits of his past calling *spiritualised*, rather than from any accurate acquaintance with the Hebrew text, in which report speaks him but a raw scholar.—Mr. Elliston, from all that we can learn, has his religion yet to choose; though some think him a Muggletonian.

SHAKSPEARE'S IMPROVERS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR"

Sir,—Partaking in your indignation at the sickly stuff interpolated by Tate in the genuine play of *King Lear*, I beg to lay before you certain kindred enormities that you may be less aware of, which that co-dilutor of Sternhold and Hopkins,[1] with his compeers, were suffered—nay, encouraged—by an English public of a century and a half ago to perpetrate upon the dramas of Shakspeare. I speak from imperfect recollection of one of these new versions which I have seen, namely, of *Coriolanus*—by the same hand which touched upon *King Lear*; in which he, the said Nahum, not deeming his author's catastrophe enough striking, makes *Aufidius* (if my memory fail me not) violate the person of the wife, and mangle the body of the little son, of his Roman rival! Shadwell, another improver, in *his* version of *Timon of Athens*, a copy of which (167$\frac{7}{8}$) is lying before me, omits the character of *Flavius*, the kind-hearted Steward—that fine exception to the air of general perfidy in the play, which would else be too oppressive to reader or spectator; and substitutes for it a *kind female* who is supposed to be attached to *Timon* to the last: thus making the moral of the piece to consist in showing—not the hollowness of friendships conciliated by a mere undistinguishing prodigality, but—the superiority of woman's love to the friendships of men. *Evandra* too has a rival in the affections of the noble Athenian. So impossible did these blockheads imagine it to be to interest the feelings of an audience without an *intrigue*, that the mis-

[1] "New Version of the Singing Psalms, by Nahum Tate, and Nicholas Brady."

anthrope *Timon* must whine, and the daughterly *Cordelia* must whimper, their love affections, before they could hope to touch the gentle hearts in the boxes! Had one of these gentry taken in hand to improve the fine Scriptural story of Joseph and his Brethren, we should have had a love passion introduced, to make the mere *fraternal interest* of the piece go down—an episode of the amours of Reuben, or Issachar—with the fair Mizraim of Egypt. Thus *Evandra* closes the eyes of Shadwell's dying *Timon*; who it seems has poisoned himself.

> *Evan.* Oh my dear lord! why do you stoop and bend
> Like flowers o'ercharg'd with dew, whose yielding stalks
> Cannot support them?
> *Timon.* So now my weary pilgrimage on earth
> Is almost finish'd! Now, my best Evandra,
> I charge thee by our loves, our mutual loves,
> Live, and live happy after me; and if
> A thought of Timon comes into thy mind,
> And brings a tear from thee—
> (*What then?—why, then*)
> —let some diversion
> Banish it.

And so, after some more drivel of the same stamp, the noble *Timon* dies. And was not this a dainty dish to set before an audience of the Dukes Theatre in the year 167⅞? Yet Betterton then acted *Timon*, and his wife *Evandra*.

I now come to the London acting edition of *Macbeth* of the same date, 1678 (played, if I remember, by the same players at the same house); from which I made a few rough extracts when I visited the British Museum for the sake of selecting from the "Garrick Plays." As I can scarcely expect to be believed upon my own word, as to what our ancestors at that time were willing to accept for Shakspeare, I refer the reader to that collection to verify my report. Who the improver was in this instance, we are left to guess, for the title-page leaves us to conjecture. Possibly the players, each one separately, contributed his new reading, which was silently adopted. Flesh and blood could not at this time of day submit to a thorough perusal of the thing; but, from a glance or two of casual inspection, I am enabled to lay before the reader a few flowers. In one of the lyric parts, *Hecate* is made to say—

> ——On a corner of the moon,
> A drop my *spectacles* have found
> I'll catch it.

Hecate, the solemn president of classic enchantments, thence adopted into the romantic — the tri-form Hecate — wearing

spectacles to assist old sight!—(No. 4 or No. 5, as the opticians class them, is not said)—one may as well fancy Cerberus in a bran new collar, or the "dreaded name of Demogorgon" in jack-boots. Among the "ingredients of the cauldron," is enumerated, not a tiger's but—what, reader?—

—a *Dutchman's* chawdron.

We were about that time engaged in a war with Holland.—Again, *Macduff* being about to journey across the heath,—the "blasted heath,"—answers his lady, who cautiously demands of him, "Are you a-foot?"

Knowing the way to be both short and easy,
And that the *chariot* did attend me here,
I have adventured——

From which we may infer, that the Thane of Fife lived as a nobleman ought to do, and—kept a carriage. Again, the same nobleman, on the morning after *Duncan's* murder, says,—"Rising this morning early, I went to look out of my window. I could scarce see further than my breath." And indeed the original author informs us, that it had been a "rough night"; so that the improver does not wander far from his text. The exquisite familiarity of this prose patch was doubtlessly intended by the improver to break the tiresome monotony of Shakspeare's blank verse. In conclusion, *Lady Macbeth* is brought in *repentant*, and counselling her husband to give up the crown for conscience sake.—*Item*, she sees a ghost, which is all the time invisible to him. Such was the *Macbeth* which Betterton acted, and a contemporary audience took on trust for Shakspeare's.

C. L.

THE DEATH OF MUNDEN

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "ATHENÆUM"

DEAR SIR,—Your communication to me of the death of Munden made me weep. Now, Sir, I am not of the melting mood. But, in these serious times, the loss of half the world's fun is no trivial deprivation. It was my loss (or *gain* shall I call it?) in the early time of my play-going, to have missed all Munden's acting. There was only he, and Lewis at Covent Garden, while Drury Lane was exuberant with Parsons, Dodd, etc., such a comic company as, I suppose, the stage never showed. Thence,

in the evening of my life I had Munden all to myself, more mellowed, richer perhaps than ever. I cannot say what his change of faces produced in me. It was not acting. He was not one of my "old actors." It might be better. His power was extravagant. I saw him one evening in three drunken characters. Three Farces were played. One part was *Dosey* —I forget the rest:—but they were so discriminated that a stranger might have seen them all, and not have dreamed that he was seeing the same actor. I am jealous for the actors who pleased my youth. He was not a Parsons or a Dodd, but he was more wonderful. He seemed as if he could *do* any thing. He was not an actor, but something *better*, if you please. Shall I instance *Old Foresight*, in "Love for Love," in which Parsons was at once the old man, the astrologer, etc. Munden dropped the old man, the doater—which makes the character—but he substituted for it a moon-struck character, a perfect abstraction from this earth, that looked as if he had newly come down from the planets. Now, *that* is not what I call *acting*. It might be better. He was imaginative; he could impress upon an audience an *idea*—the low one perhaps of a leg of mutton and turnips; but such was the grandeur and singleness of his expressions, that that single expression would convey to all his auditory a notion of all the pleasures they had all received from all the legs of mutton *and turnips* they had ever eaten in their lives. Now, this is not *acting*, nor do I set down Munden amongst my old actors. He was only a wonderful man, exerting his vivid impressions through the agency of the stage. In one only thing did I see him *act*— that is, support a character; it was in a wretched farce, called "Johnny Gilpin," for Dowton's benefit, in which he did a cockney. The thing ran but one night; but when I say that Liston's *Lubin Log* was nothing to it, I say little; it was transcendent. And here let me say of actors, *envious* actors—that of *Munden*, Liston was used to speak, almost with the enthusiasm due to the dead, in terms of such allowed superiority to every actor on the stage, and this at a time when Munden was gone by in the world's estimation, that it convinced me that *artists* (in which term I include poets, painters, etc.) are not so envious as the world think. I have little time, and therefore enclose a criticism on Munden's *Old Dosey* and his general acting, by a gentleman, who attends less to these things than formerly, but whose criticism I think masterly.

C. Lamb.

ON THE CUSTOM OF HISSING AT THE THEATRES

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF A CLUB OF DAMNED AUTHORS

Mr. Reflector, I am one of those persons whom the world has thought proper to designate by the title of Damned Authors. In that memorable season of dramatic failures, 1806–7, in which no fewer, I think, than two tragedies, four comedies, one opera, and three farces, suffered at Drury-lane theatre, I was found guilty of constructing an afterpiece, and was *damned*.

Against the decision of the public in such instances there can be no appeal. The Clerk of Chatham might as well have protested against the decision of Cade and his followers, who were then *the public*. Like him I was condemned, because I could write.

Not but it did appear to some of us, that the measures of the popular tribunal at that period savoured a little of harshness and of the *summum jus*. The public mouth was early in the season fleshed upon the Vindictive Man, and some pieces of that nature, and it retained through the remainder of it a relish of blood. As Doctor Johnson would have said, sir, there was a habit of sibilation in the house.

Still less am I disposed to inquire into the reason of the comparative lenity, on the other hand, with which some pieces were treated, which, to indifferent judges, seemed at least as much deserving of condemnation as some of those which met with it. I am willing to put a favourable construction upon the votes that were given against us; I believe that there was no bribery of designed partiality in the case;—only "our nonsense did not happen to suit their nonsense"; that was all.

But against the *manner* in which the public on these occasions think fit to deliver their disapprobation, I must and ever will protest.

Sir, imagine—but you have been present at the damning of a piece—those who never had that felicity, I beg them to imagine —a vast theatre, like that which Drury-lane was, before it was a heap of dust and ashes (I insult not over its fallen greatness, let it recover itself when it can for me, let it lift up its towering head once more, and take in poor authors to write for it; hic cæstus artemque repono)—a theatre like that, filled with all sorts of disgusting sounds,—shrieks, groans, hisses, but chiefly the last, like the noise of many waters, or that which Don

Quixote heard from the fulling mills, or that wilder combination of devilish sounds which St. Anthony listened to in the wilderness.

O, Mr. Reflector, is it not a pity, that the sweet human voice, which was given man to speak with, to sing with, to whisper tones of love in, to express compliance, to convey a favour, or to grant a suit—that voice, which in a Siddons, or a Braham, rouses us, in a Syren Catalani charms and captivates us,—that the musical, expressive human voice should be converted into a rival of the noises of silly geese, and irrational venomous snakes?

I never shall forget the sounds on *my night*. I never before that time fully felt the reception which the Author of All Ill in the Paradise Lost meets with from the critics in the *pit*, at the final close of his Tragedy upon the Human Race—though that, alas! met with too much success—

> From innumerable tongues,
> A dismal universal *hiss*, the sound
> Of public scorn. Dreadful was the din
> Of *hissing* through the hall, thick swarming now
> With complicated monsters, head and tail,
> Scorpion and asp, and Amphisbæna dire,
> Cerastes horn'd, Hydrus, and Elops drear,
> And Dipsas.

For hall substitute theatre, and you have the very image of what takes place at what is called the *damnation* of a piece,—and properly so called; for here you see its origin plainly, whence the custom was derived, and what the first piece was that so suffered. After this, none can doubt the propriety of the appellation.

But, sir, as to the justice of bestowing such appalling, heart-withering denunciations of the popular obloquy, upon the venial mistake of a poor author, who thought to please us in the act of filling his pockets,—for the sum of his demerits amounts to no more than that,—it does, I own, seem to me a species of retributive justice, far too severe for the offence. A culprit in the pillory (bate the eggs) meets with no severer exprobration.

Indeed, I have often wondered that some modest critic has not proposed, that there should be a wooden machine to that effect erected in some convenient part of the proscenium, which an unsuccessful author should be required to mount, and stand his hour, exposed to the apples and oranges of the pit;—this amende honorable would well suit with the meanness of some authors, who, in their prologues fairly prostrate their sculls to the Audience, and seem to invite a pelting.

Or why should they not have their pens publicly broke over their heads, as the swords of recreant knights in old times were, and an oath administered to them that they should never write again.

Seriously, *Messieurs the Public*, this outrageous way which you have got of expressing your displeasures, is too much for the occasion. When I was deafening under the effects of it, I could not help asking, what crime of great moral turpitude I had committed: for every man about me seemed to feel the offence as personal to himself, as something which public interest and private feelings alike called upon him in the strongest possible manner to stigmatise with infamy.

The Romans, it is well known to you, Mr. Reflector, took a gentler method of marking their disapprobation of an author's work.—They were a humane and equitable nation. They left the furca and the patibulum, the axe and the rods, to great offenders: for these minor, and (if I may so term them) extra-moral offences, *the bent thumb* was considered as a sufficient sign of disapprobation, *vertere pollicem*; as *the pressed thumb, premere pollices*, was a mark of approving.

And really there seems to have been a sort of fitness in this method, a correspondency of sign in the punishment to the offence; for as the action of *writing* is performed by bending the thumb forward, the retroversion, or bending back of that joint, did not unaptly point to the *opposite of that action*, implying, that it was the will of the audience that the author should *write no more*. A much more significant, as well as more humane, way of expressing that desire, than our custom of hissing, which is altogether senseless and indefensible. Nor do we find that the Roman audiences deprived themselves, by this lenity, of any tittle of that supremacy which audiences in all ages have thought themselves bound to maintain over such as have been candidates for their applause. On the contrary, by this method they seem to have had the author, as we should express it, completely *under finger and thumb*.

The provocations to which a dramatic genius is exposed from the public are so much the more vexatious, as they are removed from any possibility of retaliation, the hope of which sweetens most other injuries:—for the public *never writes itself*.—Not but something very like it took place at the time of the O. P. differences. The placards which were nightly exhibited, were, properly speaking, the composition of the public.—The public wrote them, the public applauded them, and precious morceaus

of wit and eloquence they were; except some few, of a better quality, which it is well known were furnished by professed dramatic writers. After this specimen of what the public can do for itself, it should be a little slow in condemning what others do for it.

As the degrees of malignancy vary in people according as they have more or less of the Old Serpent (the father of hisses) in their composition, I have sometimes amused myself with analysing this many-headed hydra, which calls itself the public, into the component parts of which it is "complicated, head and tail," and seeing how many varieties of the snake kind it can afford.

First, there is the Common English Snake.—This is that part of the auditory who are always the majority at damnations, but who, having no critical venom in themselves to sting them on, stay till they hear others hiss, and then join in for company.

The Blind Worm is a species very nearly allied to the foregoing. Some naturalists have doubted whether they are not the same.

The Rattle Snake.—These are your obstreperous talking critics,—the impertinent guides of the pit,—who will not give a plain man leave to enjoy an evening's entertainment, but with their frothy jargon and incessant finding of faults, either drown his pleasure quite, or force him in his own defence, to join in their clamorous censure. The hiss always originates with these. When this creature springs his *rattle*, you would think, from the noise it makes, there was something in it; but you have only to examine the instrument from which the noise proceeds, and you will find it typical of a critic's tongue,—a shallow membrane, empty, voluble, and seated in the most contemptible part of the creature's body.

The Whip Snake.—This is he that lashes the poor author the next day in the newspapers.

The Deaf Adder, or Surda Echidna of Linnæus.—Under this head may be classed all that portion of the spectators (for audience they properly are not) who not finding the first act of a piece answer to their preconceived notions of what a first act should be, like *Obstinate* in *John Bunyan*, positively thrust their fingers in their ears, that they may not hear a word of what is coming, though perhaps the very next act may be composed in a style as different as possible, and be written quite to their own tastes. These Adders refuse to hear the voice of the charmer, because the tuning of his instrument gave them offence.

I should weary you and myself too, if I were to go through all the classes of the serpent kind. Two qualities are common to them all. They are creatures of remarkably cold digestions, and chiefly haunt *pits* and low grounds.

I proceed with more pleasure to give you an account of a Club to which I have the honour to belong. There are fourteen of us, who are all authors that have been once in our lives what is called *damned*. We meet on the anniversaries of our respective nights, and make ourselves merry at the expence of the public. The chief tenets which distinguish our society, and which every man among us is bound to hold for gospel, are,—

That the public, or mob, in all ages, have been a set of blind, deaf, obstinate, senseless, illiterate savages. That no man of genius in his senses would be ambitious of pleasing such a capricious, ungrateful rabble. That the only legitimate end of writing for them is to pick their pockets, and, *that failing*, we are at full liberty to vilify and abuse them as much as ever we think fit.

That authors, by their affected pretences to humility, which they made use of as a cloak to insinuate their writings into the callous senses of the multitude, obtuse to everything but the grossest flattery, have by degrees made that great beast their master; as we may act submission to children till we are obliged to practise it in earnest. That authors are and ought to be considered the masters and preceptors of the public, and not *vice versa*. That it was so in the days of Orpheus, Linus, and Musæus; and would be so again, if it were not that writers prove traitors to themselves. That in particular, in the days of the first of those three great authors just mentioned, audiences appear to have been perfect models of what audiences should be; for though along with the trees and the rocks and the wild creatures, which he drew after him to listen to his strains, some serpents doubtless came to hear his music, it does not appear that any one among them ever lifted up a *dissentient voice*. They knew what was due to authors in those days. Now every stock and stone turns into a serpent, and has a voice.

That the terms "Courteous Reader" and "Candid Auditors," as having given rise to a false notion in those to whom they were applied, as if they conferred upon them some right, *which they cannot have*, of exercising their judgments, ought to be utterly banished and exploded.

These are our distinguishing tenets. To keep up the memory of the cause in which we suffered, as the ancients sacrificed a

goat, a supposed unhealthy animal, to Æsculapius, on our feast-nights we cut up a goose, an animal typical of *the popular voice*, to the deities of Candour and Patient Hearing. A zealous member of the society once proposed that we should revive the obsolete luxury of viper-broth; but the stomachs of some of the company rising at the proposition, we lost the benefit of that highly salutary and *antidotal dish*.

The privilege of admission to our club is strictly limited to such as have been fairly *damned*. A piece that has met with ever so little applause, that has but languished its night or two, and then gone out, will never entitle its author to a seat among us. An exception to our usual readiness in conferring this privilege is, in the case of a writer, who, having been once condemned, writes again, and becomes candidate for a second martyrdom. Simple damnation we hold to be a merit, but to be twice-damned we adjudge infamous. Such a one we utterly reject, and black-ball without a hearing:

The common damn'd shun his society.

Hoping that your publication of our Regulations may be a means of inviting some more members into our society, I conclude this long letter.

I am, Sir, yours,

SEMEL-DAMNATUS.

ON THE GENIUS AND CHARACTER OF HOGARTH:

WITH SOME REMARKS ON A PASSAGE IN THE WRITINGS OF THE LATE MR. BARRY

ONE of the earliest and noblest enjoyments I had when a boy was in the contemplation of those capital prints by Hogarth, the *Harlot's* and *Rake's Progresses*, which, along with some others, hung upon the walls of a great hall in an old-fashioned house in ——shire, and seemed the solitary tenants (with myself) of that antiquated and life-deserted apartment.

Recollection of the manner in which those prints used to affect me, has often made me wonder, when I have heard Hogarth described as a mere comic painter, as one of those whose chief ambition was to *raise a laugh*. To deny that there are throughout the prints which I have mentioned circumstances introduced of a laughable tendency, would be to run counter

to the common notions of mankind; but to suppose that in their *ruling character* they appeal chiefly to the risible faculty, and not first and foremost to the very heart of man, its best and most serious feelings, would be to mistake no less grossly their aim and purpose. A set of severer Satires (for they are not so much Comedies, which they have been likened to, as they are strong and masculine Satires) less mingled with any thing of mere fun, were never written upon paper, or graven upon copper. They resemble Juvenal, or the satiric touches in *Timon of Athens*.

I was pleased with the reply of a gentleman, who being asked which book he esteemed most in his library, answered,—"Shakspeare": being asked which he esteemed next best, replied,—"Hogarth." His graphic representations are indeed books: they have the teeming, fruitful, suggestive meaning of *words*. Other pictures we look at,—his prints we read.

In pursuance of this parallel, I have sometimes entertained myself with comparing the *Timon of Athens* of Shakspeare (which I have just mentioned) and Hogarth's *Rake's Progress* together. The story, the moral, in both is nearly the same. The wild course of riot and extravagance, ending in the one with driving the Prodigal from the society of men into the solitude of the deserts, and in the other with conducting the Rake through his several stages of dissipation into the still more complete desolations of the mad-house, in the play and in the picture are described with almost equal force and nature. The levee of the Rake, which forms the subject of the second plate in the series, is almost a transcript of Timon's levee in the opening scene of that play. We find a dedicating poet, and other similar characters, in both.

The concluding scene in the *Rake's Progress* is perhaps superior to the last scenes of *Timon*. If we seek for something of kindred excellence in poetry, it must be in the scenes of Lear's beginning madness, where the King and the Fool and the Tom-o'-Bedlam conspire to produce such a medley of mirth checked by misery, and misery rebuked by mirth; where the society of those "strange bed-fellows" which misfortunes have brought Lear acquainted with, so finely sets forth the destitute state of the monarch, while the lunatic bans of the one, and the disjointed sayings and wild but pregnant allusions of the other, so wonderfully sympathise with that confusion, which they seem to assist in the production of, in the senses of that "child-changed father."

In the scene in Bedlam, which terminates the *Rake's Progress*, we find the same assortment of the ludicrous with the terrible.

Here is desperate madness, the overturning of originally strong thinking faculties, at which we shudder, as we contemplate the duration and pressure of affliction which it must have asked to destroy such a building; — and here is the gradual hurtless lapse into idiocy, of faculties, which at their best of times never having been strong, we look upon the consummation of their decay with no more pity than is consistent with a smile. The mad taylor, the poor driveller that has gone out of his wits (and truly he appears to have had no great journey to go to get past their confines) for the love of *Charming Betty Careless*,—these half-laughable, scarce-pitiable objects take off from the horror which the principal figure would of itself raise, at the same time that they assist the feeling of the scene by contributing to the general notion of its subject:

> Madness, thou chaos of the brain,
> What art, that pleasure giv'st, and pain?
> Tyranny of Fancy's reign!
> Mechanic Fancy, that can build
> Vast labyrinths and mazes wild,
> With rule disjointed, shapeless measure,
> Fill'd with horror, fill'd with pleasure!
> Shapes of horror, that would even
> Cast doubts of mercy upon Heaven.
> Shapes of pleasure, that, but seen,
> Would split the shaking sides of Spleen.[1]

Is it carrying the spirit of comparison to excess to remark, that in the poor kneeling weeping female, who accompanies her seducer in his sad decay, there is something analogous to Kent, or Caius, as he delights rather to be called, in *Lear*,— the noblest pattern of virtue which even Shakspeare has conceived,—who follows his royal master in banishment, that had pronounced *his* banishment, and forgetful at once of his wrongs and dignities, taking on himself the disguise of a menial, retains his fidelity to the figure, his loyalty to the carcass, the shadow, the shell and empty husk of Lear?

In the perusal of a book, or of a picture, much of the impression which we receive depends upon the habit of mind which we bring with us to such perusal. The same circumstance may make one person laugh, which shall render another very serious; or in the same person the first impression may be corrected by after-thought. The misemployed incongruous characters at the *Harlot's Funeral*, on a superficial inspection, provoke to laughter; but when we have sacrificed the first emotion to levity, a very different frame of mind succeeds, or the painter has lost

[1] Lines inscribed under the plate.

half his purpose. I never look at that wonderful assemblage of depraved beings, who, without a grain of reverence or pity in their perverted minds, are performing the sacred exteriors of duty to the relics of their departed partner in folly, but I am as much moved to sympathy from the very want of it in them, as I should be by the finest representation of a virtuous death-bed surrounded by real mourners, pious children, weeping friends —perhaps more by the very contrast. What reflexions does it not awake, of the dreadful heartless state in which the creature (a female too) must have lived, who in death wants the accompaniment of one genuine tear. That wretch who is removing the lid of the coffin to gaze upon the corpse with a face which indicates a perfect negation of all goodness or womanhood—the hypocrite parson and his demure partner — all the fiendish group—to a thoughtful mind present a moral emblem more affecting than if the poor friendless carcass had been depicted as thrown out to the woods, where wolves had assisted at its obsequies, itself furnishing forth its own funeral banquet.

It is easy to laugh at such incongruities as are met together in this picture,—incongruous objects being of the very essence of laughter,—but surely the laugh is far different in its kind from that thoughtless species to which we are moved by mere farce and grotesque. We laugh when Ferdinand Count Fathom, at the first sight of the white cliffs of Britain, feels his heart yearn with filial fondness towards the land of his progenitors, which he is coming to fleece and plunder,—we smile at the exquisite irony of the passage,—but if we are not led on by such passages to some more salutary feeling than laughter, we are very negligent perusers of them in book or picture.

It is the fashion with those who cry up the great Historical School in this country, at the head of which Sir Joshua Reynolds is placed, to exclude Hogarth from that school, as an artist of an inferior and vulgar class. Those persons seem to me to confound the painting of subjects in common or vulgar life with the being a vulgar artist. The quantity of thought which Hogarth crowds into every picture would alone *unvulgarise* every subject which he might choose. Let us take the lowest of his subjects, the print called *Gin Lane*. Here is plenty of poverty and low stuff to disgust upon a superficial view; and accordingly, a cold spectator feels himself immediately disgusted and repelled. I have seen many turn away from it, not being able to bear it. The same persons would perhaps have looked with great complacency upon Poussin's celebrated picture of the

Plague at Athens.[1] Disease and Death and bewildering Terror, in *Athenian garments* are endurable, and come, as the delicate critics express it, within the "limits of pleasurable sensation." But the scenes of their own St. Giles's, delineated by their own countryman, are too shocking to think of. Yet if we could abstract our minds from the fascinating colours of the picture, and forget the coarse execution (in some respects) of the print, intended as it was to be a cheap plate, accessible to the poorer sort of people, for whose instruction it was done, I think we could have no hesitation in conferring the palm of superior genius upon Hogarth, comparing this work of his with Poussin's picture. There is more of imagination in it—that power which draws all things to one,—which makes things animate and inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects and their accessaries, take one colour, and serve to one effect. Every thing in the print, to use a vulgar expression, *tells*. Every part is full of "strange images of death." It is perfectly amazing and astounding to look at. Not only the two prominent figures, the woman and the half-dead man, which are as terrible as any thing which Michael Angelo ever drew, but every thing else in the print contributes to bewilder and stupefy,—the very houses, as I heard a friend of mine express it, tumbling all about in various directions, seem drunk—seem absolutely reeling from the effect of that diabolical spirit of phrenzy which goes forth over the whole composition.—To show the poetical and almost prophetical conception in the artist, one little circumstance may serve. Not content with the dying and dead figures, which he has strewed in profusion over the proper scene of the action, he shows you what (of a kindred nature) is passing beyond it. Close by the shell, in which, by direction of the parish beadle, a man is depositing his wife, is an old wall, which, partaking of the universal decay around it, is tumbling to pieces. Through a gap in this wall are seen three figures, which appear to make a part in some funeral procession which is passing by on the other side of the wall, out of the sphere of the composition. This extending of the interest beyond the bounds of the subject could only have been conceived by a great genius. Shakspeare, in his description of the painting of the Trojan War, in his *Tarquin and Lucrece*, has introduced a similar device, where the painter made a part stand for the whole:

> For much imaginary work was there,
> Conceit deceitful, so compact, so kind,

[1] At the late Mr. Hope's, in Cavendish Square.

That for Achilles' image stood his spear,
Grip'd in an armed hand; himself behind
Was left unseen, save to the eye of mind:
A hand, a foot, a face, a leg, a head,
Stood for the whole to be imagined.

This he well calls *imaginary work*, where the spectator must meet the artist in his conceptions half way; and it is peculiar to the confidence of high genius alone to trust so much to spectators or readers. Lesser artists show every thing distinct and full, as they require an object to be made out to themselves before they can comprehend it.

When I think of the power displayed in this (I will not hesitate to say) sublime print, it seems to me the extreme narrowness of system alone, and of that rage for classification, by which, in matters of taste at least, we are perpetually perplexing instead of arranging our ideas, that would make us concede to the work of Poussin above-mentioned, and deny to this of Hogarth, the name of a grand serious composition.

We are for ever deceiving ourselves with names and theories. We call one man a great historical painter, because he has taken for his subjects kings or great men, or transactions over which time has thrown a grandeur. We term another the painter of common life, and set him down in our minds for an artist of an inferior class, without reflecting whether the quantity of thought shown by the latter may not much more than level the distinction which their mere choice of subjects may seem to place between them; or whether, in fact, from that very common life a great artist may not extract as deep an interest as another man from that which we are pleased to call history.

I entertain the highest respect for the talents and virtues of Reynolds, but I do not like that his reputation should overshadow and stifle the merits of such a man as Hogarth, nor that to mere names and classifications we should be content to sacrifice one of the greatest ornaments of England.

I would ask the most enthusiastic admirer of Reynolds, whether in the countenances of his *Staring* and *Grinning Despair*, which he has given us for the faces of Ugolino and dying Beaufort, there be any thing comparable to the expression which Hogarth has put into the face of his broken-down rake in the last plate but one of the *Rake's Progress*,[1] where a letter from the manager is brought to him to say that his play "will not

[1] The first perhaps in all Hogarth for serious expression. That which comes next to it, I think, is the jaded morning countenance of the debauchee in the second plate of the *Marriage Alamode*, which lectures on the vanity of pleasure as audibly as any thing in Ecclesiastes.

do"? Here all is easy, natural, undistorted, but withal what a mass of woe is here accumulated!—the long history of a mis-spent life is compressed into the countenance as plainly as the series of plates before had told it; here is no attempt at Gorgonian looks which are to freeze the beholder, no grinning at the antique bed-posts, no face-making, or consciousness of the presence of spectators in or out of the picture, but grief kept to a man's self, a face retiring from notice with the shame which great anguish sometimes brings with it,—a final leave taken of hope,—the coming on of vacancy and stupefaction,—a beginning alienation of mind looking like tranquillity. Here is matter for the mind of the beholder to feed on for the hour together,—matter to feed and fertilise the mind. It is too real to admit one thought about the power of the artist who did it. —When we compare the expression in subjects which so fairly admit of comparison, and find the superiority so clearly to remain with Hogarth, shall the mere contemptible difference of the scene of it being laid in the one case in our Fleet or King's Bench Prison, and in the other in the State Prison of Pisa, or the bed-room of a cardinal,—or that the subject of the one has never been authenticated, and the other is matter of history, —so weigh down the real points of the comparison, as to induce us to rank the artist who has chosen the one scene or subject (though confessedly inferior in that which constitutes the soul of his art) in a class from which we exclude the better genius (who has happened to make choice of the other) with something like disgrace? [1]

The *Boys under Demoniacal Possession* of Raphael and Dominichino, by what law of classification are we bound to

[1] Sir Joshua Reynolds, somewhere in his lectures, speaks of the *presumption* of Hogarth in attempting the grand style in painting, by which he means his choice of certain Scripture subjects. Hogarth's excursions into Holy Land were not very numerous, but what he has left us in this kind have at least this merit, that they have expression of *some sort or other* in them,—the *Child Moses before Pharaoh's Daughter*, for instance: which is more than can be said of Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Repose in Egypt*, printed for Macklin's Bible, where for a Madonna he has substituted a sleepy, insensible, unmotherly girl, one so little worthy to have been selected as the Mother of the Saviour, that she seems to have neither heart nor feeling to entitle her to become a mother at all. But indeed the race of Virgin Mary painters seems to have been cut up, root and branch, at the Reformation. Our artists are too good Protestants to give life to that admirable commixture of maternal tenderness with reverential awe and wonder approaching to worship, with which the Virgin Mothers of L. da Vinci and Raphael (themselves by their divine countenances inviting men to worship) contemplate the union of the two natures in the person of their Heaven-born Infant.

assign them to belong to the great style in painting, and to degrade into an inferior class the Rake of Hogarth when he is the Madman in the Bedlam scene? I am sure he is far more impressive than either. It is a face which no one that has seen can easily forget. There is the stretch of human suffering to the utmost endurance, severe bodily pain brought on by strong mental agony, the frightful obstinate laugh of madness,—yet all so unforced and natural, that those who never were witness to madness in real life, think they see nothing but what is familiar to them in this face. Here are no tricks of distortion, nothing but the natural face of agony. This is high tragic painting, and we might as well deny to Shakspeare the honours of a great tragedian, because he has interwoven scenes of mirth with the serious business of his plays, as refuse to Hogarth the same praise for the two concluding scenes of the *Rake's Progress*, because of the Comic Lunatics [1] which he has thrown into the one, or the Alchymist that he has introduced in the other, who is paddling in the coals of his furnace, keeping alive the flames of vain hope within the very walls of the prison to which the vanity has conducted him, which have taught the darker lesson of extinguished hope to the desponding figure who is the principal person of the scene.

It is the force of these kindly admixtures, which assimilates the scenes of Hogarth and of Shakspeare to the drama of real life, where no such thing as pure tragedy is to be found; but merriment and infelicity, ponderous crime and feather-light vanity, like twi-formed births, disagreeing complexions of one intertexture, perpetually unite to show forth motley spectacles to the world. Then it is that the poet or painter shows his art, when in the selection of these comic adjuncts he chooses such circumstances as shall relieve, contrast with, or fall into, without forming a violent opposition to, his principal object. Who sees not that the Grave-digger in *Hamlet*, the Fool in *Lear*, have a kind of correspondency to, and fall in with, the subjects which they seem to interrupt, while the comic stuff in *Venice*

[1] There are of madmen, as there are of tame,
All humour'd not alike. We have here some
So apish and fantastic, play with a feather;
And though 'twould grieve a soul to see God's image
So blemish'd and defac'd, yet do they act
Such antick and such pretty lunacies,
That, spite of sorrow, they will make you smile,
Others again we have, like angry lions,
Fierce as wild bulls, untameable as flies.

Honest Whore.

Preserved, and the doggrel nonsense of the Cook and his poisoning associates in the *Rollo* of Beaumont and Fletcher, are pure, irrelevant, impertinent discords,—as bad as the quarrelling dog and cat under the table of the *Lord and the Disciples at Emmaus* of Titian?

Not to tire the reader with perpetual reference to prints which he may not be fortunate enough to possess, it may be sufficient to remark, that the same tragic cast of expression and incident, blended in some instances with a greater alloy of comedy, characterises his other great work, the *Marriage Alamode*, as well as those less elaborate exertions of his genius, the prints called *Industry* and *Idleness*, the *Distrest Poet*, etc. forming, with the *Harlot's and Rake's Progresses*, the most considerable if not the largest class of his productions,—enough surely to rescue Hogarth from the imputation of being a mere buffoon, or one whose general aim was only to *shake the sides*.

There remains a very numerous class of his performances, the object of which must be confessed to be principally comic. But in all of them will be found something to distinguish them from the droll productions of Bunbury and others. They have this difference, that we do not merely laugh at, we are led into long trains of reflection by them. In this respect they resemble the characters of Chaucer's *Pilgrims*, which have strokes of humour in them enough to designate them for the most part as comic, but our strongest feeling still is wonder at the comprehensiveness of genius which could crowd, as poet and painter have done, into one small canvas so many diverse yet co-operating materials.

The faces of Hogarth have not a mere momentary interest, as in caricatures, or those grotesque physiognomies which we sometimes catch a glance of in the street, and, struck with their whimsicality, wish for a pencil and the power to sketch them down; and forget them again as rapidly,—but they are permanent abiding ideas. Not the sports of nature, but her necessary eternal classes. We feel that we cannot part with any of them, lest a link should be broken.

It is worthy of observation, that he has seldom drawn a mean or insignificant countenance.[1] Hogarth's mind was eminently

[1] If there are any of that description, they are in his *Strolling Players*, a print which has been cried up by Lord Orford as the richest of his productions, and it may be, for what I know, in the mere lumber, the properties, and dead furniture of the scene, but in living character and expression it is (for Hogarth) lamentably poor and wanting; it is perhaps the only one of his performances at which we have a right to feel disgusted.

WILLIAM HOGARTH

Engraved by Harding
after the original painting by Hogarth.

See p. 244

reflective; and, as it has been well observed of Shakspeare, that he has transfused his own poetical character into the persons of his drama (they are all more or less *poets*), Hogarth has impressed a *thinking character* upon the persons of his canvas. This remark must not be taken universally. The exquisite idiotism of the little gentleman in the bag and sword beating his drum in the print of the *Enraged Musician*, would of itself rise up against so sweeping an assertion. But I think it will be found to be true of the generality of his countenances. The knife-grinder and Jew flute-player in the plate just mentioned, may serve as instances instead of a thousand. They have intense thinking faces, though the purpose to which they are subservient by no means required it; but indeed it seems as if it was painful to Hogarth to contemplate mere vacancy or insignificance.

This reflection of the artist's own intellect from the faces of his characters, is one reason why the works of Hogarth, so much more than those of any other artist, are objects of meditation. Our intellectual natures love the mirror which gives them back their own likenesses. The mental eye will not bend long with delight upon vacancy.

Another line of eternal separation between Hogarth and the common painters of droll or burlesque subjects, with whom he is often confounded, is the sense of beauty, which in the most unpromising subjects seems never wholly to have deserted him. "Hogarth himself," says Mr. Coleridge,[1] from whom I have borrowed this observation, speaking of a scene which took place at Ratzeburg, "never drew a more ludicrous distortion, both of attitude and physiognomy, than this effect occasioned: nor was there wanting beside it one of those beautiful female faces which the same Hogarth, *in whom the satirist never extinguished that love of beauty which belonged to him as a poet*, so often and so gladly introduces as the central figure in a crowd of humorous deformities, which figure (such is the power of true genius) neither acts nor is meant to act as a contrast; but diffuses through all, and over each of the group, a spirit of reconciliation and human kindness; and even when the attention is no longer consciously directed to the cause of this feeling, still blends its tenderness with our laughter: and *thus prevents the instructive merriment at the whims of nature, or the foibles or humours of our fellow-men, from degenerating into the heart-poison of contempt or hatred*." To the beautiful females in Hogarth,

[1] *The Friend*, No. XVI.

which Mr. C. has pointed out, might be added, the frequent introduction of children (which Hogarth seems to have taken a particular delight in) into his pieces. They have a singular effect in giving tranquillity and a portion of their own innocence to the subject. The baby riding in its mother's lap in the *March to Finchley*, (its careless innocent face placed directly behind the intriguing time-furrowed countenance of the treason-plotting French priest) perfectly sobers the whole of that tumultuous scene. The boy mourner winding up his top with so much unpretending insensibility in the plate of the *Harlot's Funeral*, (the only thing in that assembly that is not a hypocrite) quiets and soothes the mind that has been disturbed at the sight of so much depraved man and woman kind.

I had written thus far, when I met with a passage in the writings of the late Mr. Barry, which, as it falls in with the *vulgar notion* respecting Hogarth, which this Essay has been employed in combating, I shall take the liberty to transcribe, with such remarks as may suggest themselves to me in the transcription; referring the reader for a full answer to that which has gone before.

Notwithstanding Hogarth's merit does undoubtedly entitle him to an honourable place among the artists, and that his little compositions, considered as so many dramatic representations, abounding with humour, character, and extensive observations on the various incidents of low, faulty, and vicious life, are very ingeniously brought together, and frequently tell their own story with more facility than is often found in many of the elevated and more noble inventions of Rafaelle, and other great men; yet it must be honestly confessed, that in what is called knowledge of the figure, foreigners have justly observed, that Hogarth is often so raw and unformed, as hardly to deserve the name of an artist. But this capital defect is not often perceivable, as examples of the naked and of elevated nature but rarely occur in his subjects, which are for the most part filled with characters, that in their nature tend to deformity; besides, his figures are small, and the jonctures, and other difficulties of drawing that might occur in their limbs, are artfully concealed with their clothes, rags, etc. But what would atone for all his defects, even if they were twice told, is his admirable fund of invention, ever inexhaustible in its resources; and his satyr, which is always sharp and pertinent, and often highly moral, was (except in a few instances, where he weakly and meanly suffered his integrity to give way to his envy) seldom or never employed in a dishonest or unmanly way. Hogarth has been often imitated in his satirical vein, sometimes in his humorous; but very few have attempted to rival him in his moral walk. The line of art pursued by my very ingenious predecessor and brother academician, Mr. Penny, is quite distinct from that of Hogarth, and is of a much more delicate and

superior relish; he attempts the heart, and reaches it, whilst Hogarth's general aim is only to shake the sides; in other respects no comparison can be thought of, as Mr. Penny has all that knowledge of the figure and academical skill, which the other wanted. As to Mr. Bunbury, who had so happily succeeded in the vein of humour and caricatura, he has for some time past altogether relinquished it, for the more amiable pursuit of beautiful nature: this, indeed, is not to be wondered at, when we recollect that he has, in Mrs. Bunbury, so admirable an exemplar of the most finished grace and beauty continually at his elbow. But (to say all that occurs to me on this subject) perhaps it may be reasonably doubted, whether the being much conversant with Hogarth's method of exposing meanness, deformity, and vice, in many of his works, is not rather a dangerous, or, at least, a worthless pursuit; which, if it does not find a false relish and a love of and search after satyr and buffoonery in the spectator, is at least not unlikely to give him one. Life is short; and the little leisure of it is much better laid out upon that species of art which is employed about the amiable and the admirable, as it is more likely to be attended with better and nobler consequences to ourselves. These two pursuits in art may be compared with two sets of people with whom we might associate: if we give ourselves up to the Foots, the Kenricks, etc. we shall be continually busied and paddling in whatever is ridiculous, faulty, and vicious in life; whereas there are those to be found with whom we should be in the constant pursuit and study of all that gives a value and a dignity to human nature. [Account of a Series of Pictures in the Great Room of the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, at the Adelphi, by James Barry, R.A., Professor of Painting to the Royal Academy; reprinted in the last quarto edition of his works.]

It must be honestly confessed, that in what is called knowledge of the figure, foreigners have justly observed, etc.

It is a secret well known to the professors of the art and mystery of criticism, to insist upon what they do not find in a man's works, and to pass over in silence what they do. That Hogarth did not draw the naked figure so well as Michael Angelo might be allowed, especially as "examples of the naked," as Mr. Barry acknowledges, "rarely (he might almost have said never) occur in his subjects"; and that his figures under their draperies do not discover all the fine graces of an Antinous or an Apollo, may be conceded likewise; perhaps it was more suitable to his purpose to represent the average forms of mankind in the mediocrity (as Mr. Burke expresses it) of the age in which he lived; but that his figures in general, and in his best subjects, are so glaringly incorrect as is here insinuated, I dare trust my own eye so far as positively to deny the fact. And there is one part of the figure in which Hogarth is allowed to have excelled, which these foreigners seem to have overlooked,

or perhaps calculating from its proportion to the whole (a seventh or an eighth, I forget which) deemed it of trifling importance; I mean the human face; a small part, reckoning by geographical inches, in the map of man's body, but here it is that the painter of expression must condense the wonders of his skill, even at the expense of neglecting the "jonctures and other difficulties of drawing in the limbs," which it must be a cold eye that in the interest so strongly demanded by Hogarth's countenances has leisure to survey and censure.

The line of art pursued by my very ingenious predecessor and brother academician, Mr. Penny.

The first impression caused in me by reading this passage, was an eager desire to know who this Mr. Penny was. This great surpasser of Hogarth in the "delicacy of his relish," and the "line which he pursued," where is he, what are his works, what has he to show? In vain I tried to recollect, till by happily putting the question to a friend who is more conversant in the works of the illustrious obscure than myself, I learnt that he was the painter of a *Death of Wolfe* which missed the prize the year that the celebrated picture of West on the same subject obtained it; that he also made a picture of the *Marquis of Granby relieving a Sick Soldier*; moreover, that he was the inventor of two pictures of *Suspended and Restored Animation*, which I now remember to have seen in the Exhibition some years since, and the prints from which are still extant in good men's houses. This then, I suppose, is the line of subjects in which Mr. Penny was so much superior to Hogarth. I confess I am not of that opinion. The relieving of poverty by the purse, and the restoring of a young man to his parents by using the methods prescribed by the Humane Society, are doubtless very amiable subjects, pretty things to teach the first rudiments of humanity; they amount to about as much instruction as the stories of good boys that give away their custards to poor beggar-boys in children's books. But, good God! is this *milk for babes* to be set up in opposition to Hogarth's moral scenes, his *strong meat for men*? As well might we prefer the fulsome verses upon their own goodness, to which the gentlemen of the Literary Fund annually sit still with such shameless patience to listen, to the satires of Juvenal and Persius; because the former are full of tender images of Worth relieved by Charity, and Charity stretching out her hand to rescue sinking Genius, and the theme of the latter is men's crimes and follies with their black con-

sequences—forgetful meanwhile of those strains of moral pathos, those sublime heart-touches, which these poets (in *them* chiefly showing themselves poets) are perpetually darting across the otherwise appalling gloom of their subject—consolatory remembrancers, when their pictures of guilty mankind have made us even to despair for our species, that there is such a thing as virtue and moral dignity in the world, that her unquenchable spark is not utterly out—refreshing admonitions, to which we turn for shelter from the too great heat and asperity of the general satire.

And is there nothing analogous to this in Hogarth? nothing which "attempts and reaches the heart"?—no aim beyond that of "shaking the sides"?—If the kneeling ministering female in the last scene of the *Rake's Progress*, the Bedlam scene, of which I have spoken before, and have dared almost to parallel it with the most absolute idea of Virtue which Shakspeare has left us, be not enough to disprove the assertion; if the sad endings of the Harlot and the Rake, the passionate heart-bleeding entreaties for forgiveness which the adulterous wife is pouring forth to her assassinated and dying lord in the last scene but one of the *Marriage Alamode*,—if these be not things to touch the heart, and dispose the mind to a meditative tenderness: is there nothing sweetly conciliatory in the mild, patient face and gesture with which the wife seems to allay and ventilate the feverish irritated feelings of her poor poverty-distracted mate (the true copy of the *genus irritabile*) in the print of the *Distrest Poet*? or if an image of maternal love be required, where shall we find a sublimer view of it than in that aged woman in *Industry and Idleness* (plate v.) who is clinging with the fondness of hope not quite extinguished to her brutal vice-hardened child, whom she is accompanying to the ship which is to bear him away from his native soil, of which he has been adjudged unworthy; in whose shocking face every trace of the human countenance seems obliterated, and a brute beast's to be left instead, shocking and repulsive to all but her who watched over it in his cradle before it was so sadly altered, and feels it must belong to her while a pulse by the vindictive laws of his country shall be suffered to continue to beat in it. Compared with such things, what is Mr. Penny's "knowledge of the figure and academical skill which Hogarth wanted"?

With respect to what follows concerning another gentleman, with the congratulations to him on his escape out of the regions of "humour and caricatura," in which it appears he was in

danger of travelling side by side with Hogarth, I can only congratulate my country, that Mrs. Hogarth knew *her* province better than, by disturbing her husband at his pallet, to divert him from that universality of subject, which has stamped him perhaps, next to Shakspeare, the most inventive genius which this island has produced, into the "amiable pursuit of beautiful nature," i.e. copying ad infinitum the individual charms and graces of Mrs. H——.

Hogarth's method of exposing meanness, deformity, and vice, paddling in whatever is ridiculous, faulty, and vicious.

A person unacquainted with the works thus stigmatised would be apt to imagine, that in Hogarth there was nothing else to be found but subjects of the coarsest and most repulsive nature. That his imagination was naturally unsweet, and that he delighted in raking into every species of moral filth. That he preyed upon sore places only, and took a pleasure in exposing the unsound and rotten parts of human nature;—whereas, with the exception of some of the plates of the *Harlot's Progress*, which are harder in their character than any of the rest of his productions, (the *Stages of Cruelty* I omit as mere worthless caricaturas, foreign to his general habits, the offspring of his fancy in some wayward humour), there is scarce one of his pieces where vice is most strongly satirised, in which some figure is not introduced upon which the moral eye may rest satisfied; a face that indicates goodness, or perhaps mere good humouredness and carelessness of mind (negation of evil) only, yet enough to give a relaxation to the frowning brow of satire, and keep the general air from tainting. Take the mild, supplicating posture of patient Poverty in the poor woman that is persuading the pawnbroker to accept her clothes in pledge, in the plate of *Gin Lane*, for an instance. A little does it, a little of the *good* nature overpowers a world of *bad*. One cordial honest laugh of a Tom Jones absolutely clears the atmosphere that was reeking with the black putrifying breathings of a hypocrite Blifil. One homely expostulating shrug from Strap, warms the whole air which the suggestions of a gentlemanly ingratitude from his friend Random had begun to freeze. One "Lord bless us!" of Parson Adams upon the wickedness of the times, exorcises and purges off the mass of iniquity which the world-knowledge of even a Fielding could cull out and rake together. But of the severer class of Hogarth's performances, enough, I trust, has been said to show that they do not merely

shock and repulse; that there is in them the "scorn of vice" and the "pity" too; something to touch the heart, and keep alive the sense of moral beauty; the "lacrymæ rerum," and the sorrowing by which the heart is made better. If they be bad things, then is satire and tragedy a bad thing; let us proclaim at once an age of gold, and sink the existence of vice and misery in our speculations; let us

> —— wink, and shut our apprehensions up
> From common sense of what men were and are:

let us *make believe* with the children, that every body is good and happy; and, with Dr. Swift, write panegyrics upon the world.

But that larger half of Hogarth's works which were painted more for entertainment than instruction (though such was the suggestiveness of his mind, that there is always something to be learnt from them), his humorous scenes,—are they such as merely to disgust and set us against our species?

The confident assertions of such a man as I consider the late Mr. Barry to have been, have that weight of authority in them which staggers, at first hearing, even a long preconceived opinion. When I read his pathetic admonition concerning the shortness of life, and how much better the little leisure of it were laid out upon "that species of art which is employed about the amiable and the admirable"; and Hogarth's "method" proscribed as a "dangerous or worthless pursuit," I began to think there was something in it; that I might have been indulging all my life a passion for the works of this artist, to the utter prejudice of my taste and moral sense; but my first convictions gradually returned, a world of good-natured English faces came up one by one to my recollection, and a glance at the matchless *Election Entertainment*, which I have the happiness to have hanging up in my parlour, subverted Mr. Barry's whole theory in an instant.

In that inimitable print, (which in my judgment as far exceeds the more known and celebrated *March to Finchley*, as the best comedy exceeds the best farce that ever was written,) let a person look till he be saturated, and when he has done wondering at the inventiveness of genius which could bring so many characters (more than thirty distinct classes of face) into a room and set them down at table together, or otherwise dispose them about, in so natural a manner, engage them in so many easy sets and occupations, yet all partaking of the

spirit of the occasion which brought them together, so that we feel that nothing but an election time could have assembled them; having no central figure or principal group, (for the hero of the piece, the Candidate, is properly set aside in the levelling indistinction of the day, one must look for him to find him) nothing to detain the eye from passing from part to part, where every part is alike instinct with life,—for here are no furniture-faces,—no figures brought in to fill up the scene like stage choruses, but all dramatis personæ: when he shall have done wondering at all these faces so strongly charactered, yet finished with the accuracy of the finest miniature; when he shall have done admiring the numberless appendages of the scene, those gratuitous doles which rich genius flings into the heap when it has already done enough, the over-measure which it delights in giving, as if it felt its stores were exhaustless; the dumb rhetoric of the scenery — for tables, and chairs, and joint-stools in Hogarth, are living and significant things; the witticisms that are expressed by words, (all artists but Hogarth have failed when they have endeavoured to combine two mediums of expression, and have introduced words into their pictures), and the unwritten numberless little allusive pleasantries that are scattered about; the work that is going on in the scene, and beyond it, as is made visible to the "eye of mind," by the mob which chokes up the doorway, and the sword that has forced an entrance before its master; when he shall have sufficiently admired this wealth of genius, let him fairly say what is the *result* left on his mind. Is it an impression of the vileness and worthlessness of his species? or is it not the general feeling which remains, after the individual faces have ceased to act sensibly on his mind, a *kindly one in favour of his species*? was not the general air of the scene wholesome? did it do the heart hurt to be among it? Something of a riotous spirit to be sure is there, some wordly-mindedness in some of the faces, a Doddingtonian smoothness which does not promise any superfluous degree of sincerity in the fine gentleman who has been the occasion of calling so much good company together: but is not the general cast of expression in the faces, of the good sort? do they not seem cut out of the *good old rock*, substantial English honesty? Would one fear treachery among characters of their expression? or shall we call their honest mirth and seldom-returning relaxation by the hard names of vice and profligacy? That poor country fellow, that is grasping his staff (which, from that difficulty of feeling themselves at home which poor men experience

at a feast, he has never parted with since he came into the room), and is enjoying with a relish that seems to fit all the capacities of his soul the slender joke, which that facetious wag his neighbour is practising upon the gouty gentleman, whose eyes the effort to suppress pain has made as round as rings—does it shock the "dignity of human nature" to look at that man, and to sympathise with him in the seldom-heard joke which has unbent his careworn, hard-working visage, and drawn iron smiles from it; or with that full-hearted cobbler, who is honouring with the grasp of an honest fist the unused palm of that annoyed patrician, whom the licence of the time has seated next him.

I can see nothing "dangerous" in the contemplation of such scenes as this, or the *Enraged Musician*, or the *Southwark Fair*, or twenty other pleasant prints which come crowding in upon my recollection, in which the restless activities, the diversified bents and humours, the blameless peculiarities of men, as they deserve to be called, rather than their "vices and follies," are held up in a laughable point of view. All laughter is not of a dangerous or soul-hardening tendency. There is the petrifying sneer of a demon which excludes and kills Love, and there is the cordial laughter of a man which implies and cherishes it. What heart was ever made the worse by joining in a hearty laugh at the simplicities of Sir Hugh Evans or Parson Adams, where a sense of the ridiculous mutually kindles and is kindled by a perception of the amiable? That tumultuous harmony of singers that are roaring out the words, "The world shall bow to the Assyrian throne," from the opera of *Judith*, in the third plate of the series called the *Four Groups of Heads*; which the quick eye of Hogarth must have struck off in the very infancy of the rage for sacred oratorios in this country, while "Music yet was young"; when we have done smiling at the deafening distortions, which these tearers of devotion to rags and tatters, these takers of Heaven by storm, in their boisterous mimicry of the occupation of angels, are making,—what unkindly impression is left behind, or what more of harsh or contemptuous feeling, than when we quietly leave Uncle Toby and Mr. Shandy riding their hobby-horses about the room? The conceited, long-backed Sign-painter, that with all the self-applause of a Raphael or Corregio (the twist of body which his conceit has thrown him into has something of the Corregiesque in it) is contemplating the picture of a bottle which he is drawing from an actual bottle that hangs beside him, in the print of *Beer Street*,—while we smile at the enormity of the self-delusion,

can we help loving the good humour and self-complacency of the fellow? Would we willingly wake him from his dream?

I say not that all the ridiculous subjects of Hogarth have necessarily something in them to make us like them; some are indifferent to us, some in their natures repulsive, and only made interesting by the wonderful skill and truth to nature in the painter; but I contend that there is in most of them that sprinkling of the better nature, which, like holy water, chases away and disperses the contagion of the bad. They have this in them besides, that they bring us acquainted with the every-day human face,—they give us skill to detect those gradations of sense and virtue (which escape the careless or fastidious observer) in the countenances of the world about us; and prevent that disgust at common life, that *tædium quotidianarum formarum*, which an unrestricted passion for ideal forms and beauties is in danger of producing. In this, as in many other things, they are analogous to the best novels of Smollett or Fielding.

THE REYNOLDS GALLERY

The Reynolds Gallery has upon the whole, disappointed me. Some of the portraits are interesting. They are faces of characters whom we (middle-aged gentlemen) were born a little too late to remember, but about whom we have heard our fathers tell stories, till we almost fancy to have seen them. There is a charm in the portrait of a Rodney, or a Keppel, which even a picture of Nelson must want for me. I should turn away after a slight inspection from the best likeness that could be made of Mrs. Anne Clark; but Kitty Fisher is a considerable personage. Then the dresses of some of the women so exactly remind us of modes which we can just recall; of the forms under which the venerable relationships of aunt or mother first presented themselves to our young eyes; the aprons, the coifs, the lappets, the hoods. Mercy on us, what a load of head-ornaments seem to have conspired to bury a pretty face in the picture of Mrs. Long, *yet could not!* Beauty must have some "charmed life" to have been able to surmount the conspiracy of fashion in those days to destroy it. The portraits which least pleased me were those of boys, as infant Bacchuses, Jupiters, etc. But the Artist is not to be blamed for the disguise. No doubt the

parents wished to see their children deified in their lifetime. It was but putting a thunderbolt (instead of a squib) into young master's hands, and a whey-faced chit was transformed into the infant ruler of Olympus, him who was afterward to shake heaven and earth with his black brow. Another good boy pleased his grandmama with saying his prayers so well, and the blameless dotage of the good old woman imagined in him an adequate representative of the infancy of the awful prophet Samuel. *But the great historical compositions, where the Artist was at liberty* to paint from *his own idea—the Beaufort and the Ugolino*;—why then, I must confess, pleading the liberty of Table-Talk for my presumption, that they have not left any very elevating impressions upon my mind. Pardon a ludicrous comparison. I know, Madam, you admire them both; but placed opposite to each other as they are at the Gallery, as if to set the one work in competition with the other, they did remind me of the famous contention for the prize of deformity, mentioned in the 173d number of the *Spectator*. The one stares and the other grins; but is there common dignity in their countenances? Does any thing of the history of their life gone by peep through the ruins of the mind in the face, like the unconquerable grandeur that surmounts the distortions of the Laocoon? The figures which stand by the bed of Beaufort are indeed happy representations of the plain unmannered old Nobility of the English Historical Plays of Shakspeare; but for any thing else,—give me leave to recommend these Macaroons.

After leaving the Reynolds Gallery, where, upon the whole, I received a good deal of pleasure, and feeling that I had quite had my fill of paintings, I stumbled upon a picture in Piccadilly (No. 22, I think), which purports to be a portrait of Francis the First by Leonardo da Vinci. Heavens, what a difference! It is but a portrait as most of those I had been seeing; but placed by them it would kill them, swallow them up as Moses's rod the other rods. Where did those old painters get their models? I see no such figures, not in my dreams, as this Francis, in the character, or rather with the attributes of John the Baptist. A more than mortal majesty in the brow and upon the eyelid—an arm muscular, beautifully formed—the long graceful massy fingers compressing, yet so as not to hurt, a lamb more lovely, more sweetly shrinking, than we can conceive that milk-white one which followed Una. The picture altogether looking as if it were eternal—combining the truth of flesh with a promise of permanence like marble.

Leonardo, from the one or two specimens we have of him in England, must have been a stupendous genius. I scarce can think he has had his full fame—he who could paint that wonderful personification of the Logos or third person of the Trinity, grasping a globe, late in the possession of Mr. Troward, of Pall-Mall, where the hand was by the boldest licence twice as big as the truth of drawing warranted, yet the effect to every one that saw it, by some magic of genius, was confessed to be not *monstrous*, but *miraculous* and *silencing*. It could not be gainsaid.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A LATE ROYAL ACADEMICIAN

What Apelles was to the *Grecian Alexander*, the same to the *Russian* was the late G— D—. None but Apelles might attempt the lineaments of the world's conqueror; none but our Academician could have done justice to the lines of the Czar, and his courtiers. There they hang, the labour of ten plodding years, in an endless gallery, erected for the nonce, in the heart of Imperial Petersburgh—eternal monuments of barbarian taste submitting to half-civilised cunning — four hundred fierce Half-Lengths, all male, and all military; like the pit in a French theatre, or the characters in Timon as it was last acted, with never a woman among them. Chaste sitters to Vandyke, models of grace and womanhood; and thou, Dame Venetia Digby, fairest among thy fair compeers at Windsor, hide your pure pale cheeks, and cool English beauties, before this suffocating horde of Scythian riflers, this male chaos! Your cold oaken frames shall wane before the gorgeous gildings,

> With Tartar faces thronged, and horrent uniforms.

One emperor contended for the monopoly of the *ancient*; two were competitors at once for the pencil of the *modern Apelles*. The Russian carried it against the Haytian by a single length. And if fate, as it was at one time nearly arranged, had wafted D. to the shores of Hayti—with the same complacency in his art, with which he persisted in daubing in, day after day, his frozen Muscovites, he would have sate down for life to smutch in upon canvass the faces of blubber-lipped sultanas, or the whole male retinue of the dingy court of Christophe. For in truth a choice of subjects was the least

of D.'s care. A Goddess from Cnidus, or from the Caffre coast, was equal to him; Lot, or Lot's wife; the charming widow H., or her late husband.

My acquaintance with D. was in the outset of his art, when the graving tools, rather than the pencil, administered to his humble wants. Those implements, as is well known, are not the most favourable to the cultivation of that virtue which is esteemed next to godliness. He might "wash his hands in innocency," and so metaphorically "approach an altar"; but his material puds were any thing but fit to be carried to church. By an ingrained economy in soap—if it was not for pictorial effect rather—he would wash (on Sundays) the inner oval, or portrait, as it may be termed, of his countenance, leaving the unwashed temples to form a natural black frame round a picture, in which a dead white was the predominant colour. This, with the addition of green spectacles, made necessary by the impairment, which his graving labours by day and night (for he was ordinarily at them for sixteen hours out of the twenty-four) had brought upon his visual faculties, gave him a singular appearance, when he took the air abroad; in so much, that I have seen a crowd of young men and boys following him along Oxford-street with admiration, not without shouts; even as the Youth of Rome, we read in Vasari, followed the steps of Raphael with acclamations for his genius, and for his beauty, when he proceeded from his work-shop to chat with Cardinals and Popes at the Vatican.

The family of D. were not at this time in affluent circumstances. His father, a clever artist, had outlived the style of art, in which he excelled most of his contemporaries. He, with the father of the celebrated Morland, worked for the shop of Carrington and Bowles, which exists still for the poorer sort of caricatures, on the North side of St. Paul's Church Yard. They did clever things in colours. At an inn in Reading a screen is still preserved full of their labours; but the separate portions of either artist are now undistinguishable. I remember a Mother teaching her Child to read (B. Barton has a copy of it); a Laundress washing; a young Quaker, a beautiful subject. But the flower of their forgotten productions hangs still at a public house on the left hand, as thou arrivest, Reader, from the now Highgate arch-way, at the foot of the descent where Crouch End begins, on thy road to green Hornsey. Turn in, and look at it, for the sight is well worth a cup of excusatory cyder. In the parlour to the right you will find it—an antiquated subject—a Damsel

sitting at her breakfast table in a gown of the flowered chintz of our grandmothers, with a tea-service before her of the *same pattern*. The effect is most delicate. Why have these harmonies—these *agrémens*—no place in the works of modern art?

With such niceties in his calling D. did not much trouble his head, but, after an ineffectual experiment to reconcile his eye-sight with his occupation, boldly quitted it, and dashed into the beaten road of common-place portraiture in oil. The Hopners, and the Lawrences, were his Vandykes and his Velasquezes; and if he could make anything like them, he insured himself immortality. With such guides he struggled on through laborious nights and days, till he reached the eminence he aimed at—of mediocrity. Having gained that summit, he sate down contented. If the features were but cognoscible, no matter whether the flesh resembled flesh, or oil-skin. For the thousand tints—the grains—which in the life diversify the nose, the chin, the cheek—which a Reynolds can but coarsely counterfeit—he cared nothing at all about them. He left such scrupulosities to opticians and anatomists. If the features were but there, the character of course could not be far off. A lucky hit which he made in painting the *dress* of a very dressy lady—Mrs. W—e—, whose handsome countenance also, and tall elegance of shape, were too palpable entirely to escape under any masque of oil, with which even D. could overlay them—brought to him, at once, an influx of sitters, which almost rivalled the importunate calls upon Sir Thomas. A portrait, he *did* soon after, of the Princess Charlotte, clenched his fame. He proceeded Academician. At that memorable conjuncture of time it pleased the Allied Sovereigns to visit England.

I called upon D. to congratulate him upon a crisis so doubly eventful. His pleasant housekeeper seemed embarrassed; owned that her master was alone. But could he be spoken with? With some importunity I prevailed upon her to usher me up into his painting-room. It was in Newman-street. At his easel stood D., with an immense spread of canvass before him, and by his side a—live Goose. I inquired into this extraordinary combination. Under the rose he informed me, that he had undertaken to paint a transparency for Vauxhall, against an expected visit of the Allied Sovereigns to that place. I smiled at an engagement so derogatory to his new-born honours; but a contempt of small gains was never one of D.'s foibles. My eyes beheld crude forms of warriors, kings, rising under his brush upon this interminable stretch of cloth. The

Wolga, the Don, and the Nieper, were there, or their representative River Gods; and Father Thames clubbed urns with the Vistula. Glory with her dazzling Eagle was not absent, nor Fame, nor Victory. The shade of Rubens might have evoked the mighty allegories. But what was the Goose? He was evidently *sitting* for a something.

D. at last informed me, that having fixed upon a group of rivers, he could not introduce the Royal Thames without his *swans*. That he had inquired the price of a live swan, and it being more than he was prepared to give for it, he had bargained with the poulterer for the *next thing to it*; adding significantly, that it would do to roast, after it had served its turn to paint swans by. *Reader, this is a true story.*

So entirely devoid of imagination, or any feeling for his high art, was this *Painter*, that for the few historical pictures he attempted, any sitter might sit for any character. He took once for a subject *The Infant Hercules*. Did he chuse for a model some robust antique? No. He did not even pilfer from Sir Joshua, who was nearer to his own size. But from a *show* he hired to sit to him a child in years indeed, (though no Infant), but in fact a precocious *Man*, or human portent, that was disgustingly exhibiting at that period; a thing to be strangled. From this he formed *his* Infant Hercules. In a scriptural flight he next attempted a Samson in the lap of Delilah. A Delilah of some sort was procureable for love or money, but who should stand for the Jewish Hercules? He hired a tolerably stout porter, with a thickish head of hair, curling in yellowish locks, but lithe—much like a wig. And these were the robust strengths of Samson!

I once was witness to a *family scene* in his painting closet, which I had entered rather abruptly, and but for his encouragement, should as hastily have retreated. He stood with displeased looks eyeing a female relative—whom I had known under happier auspices—that was kneeling at his feet with a baby in her arms, with her eyes uplifted and suppliant. Though I could have previously sworn to the virtue of Miss ——, yet casual slips have been known. There are such things as families disgraced, where least you would have expected it. The child *might* be——; I had heard of no wedding—I was the last person to pry into family secrets—when D. relieved my uneasy cogitations by explaining, that the innocent, good-humoured creature before me, (such as she ever was, and is now that she is married) with a baby borrowed from the public house, was acting

Andromache to *his* Ulysses, for the purpose of transferring upon canvass a tender situation from the Troades of Seneca.

On a subsequent occasion I knocked at D.'s door. I had chanced to have been in a dreamy humour previously. I am not one that often poetises, but I had been musing—cox-combically enough in the heart of Newman-street, Oxford Road —upon Pindus, and the Aonian Maids. The Lover of Daphne was in my mind—when, answering to my summons, the door opened, and there stood before me, laurel-crowned, the God himself, unshorn Apollo. I was beginning to mutter apologies to the Celestial Presence—when on the thumb of the right hand of the Delian (his left held the harp) I spied a pallet, such as painters carry, which immediately reconciled me to the whimsical transformation of my old acquaintance — with his own face, certainly any other than Grecianesque—into a temporary image of the oracle-giver of Delphos. To have impersonated the Ithacan was little; he had been just sitting for a God.—It would be no incurious inquiry to ascertain what the *minimum* of the faculty of imagination, ever supposed essential to painters along with poets, is, that, in these days of complaints of want of patronage towards the fine arts, suffices to dub a man a R——l A————n.

Not only had D. no imagination to guide him in the treatment of such subjects, but he had no relish for high art in the productions of the great masters. He turned away from them as from something foreign and irrelative to him, and his calling. He knew he had neither part nor portion in them. Cozen him into the Stafford or the Angerstein Gallery, he involuntarily turned away from the Baths of Diana — the Four Ages of Guercino — the Lazarus of Piombo — to some petty piece of *modern art* that had been inconsistently thrust into the collection through favour. On that he would dwell and pore, blind as the dead to the delicacies that surrounded him. There he might learn something. There he might pilfer a little. There was no grappling with Titian, or Angelo.

The narrowness of his domestic habits to the very last, was the consequence of his hard bringing up, and unexpected emergence into opulence. While rolling up to the ears in Russian rubles, a penny was still in his eyes the same important thing, which it had with some reason seemed to be, when a few shillings were his daily earnings. When he visited England a short time before his death, he reminded an artist of a commission which he had executed for him in Russia, the package

THOMAS FULLER

From an engraving by David Loggan. *See p. 266*

of which was "still unpaid." At this time he was not unreasonably supposed to have realised a sum little short of half a million sterling. What became of it was never known; what gulf, or what Arctic *vorago*, sucked it in, his acquaintance in those parts have better means of guessing, than his countrymen. It is certain that few of the latter were anything the better for it.

It was before he expatriated himself, but subsequently to his acquisition of pictorial honours in this country, that he brought home two of his brother Academicians to dine with him. He had given no orders extraordinary to his housekeeper. He trusted, as he always did, to her providing. She was a shrewd lass, and knew, as we say, a bit of her master's mind.

It had happened that on the day before, D. passing near Clare Market by one of those open shambles, where tripe and cow-heel are exposed for sale, his eye was arrested by the sight of some tempting flesh *rolled up*. It is a part of the intestines of some animal, which my olfactory sensibilities never permitted me to stay long enough to inquire the name of. D. marked the curious involutions of the unacquainted luxury; the harmony of its colours—a *sable vert*—pleased his eye; and, warmed with the prospect of a new flavour, for a few farthings he bore it off in triumph to his housekeeper. It so happened that his day's dinner was provided, so the cooking of the novelty was for that time necessarily suspended.

Next day came. The hour of dinner approached. His visitors, with no very romantic anticipations, expected a plain meal at least; they were prepared for no new dainties; when, to the astonishment of them, and almost of D. himself, the purchase of the preceding day was served up piping hot—the cook declaring, that she did not know well what it was, for "her master always marketed." His guests were not so happy in their ignorance. They kept dogs.

I will do D. the justice to say, that on such occasions he took what happened in the best humour possible. He had no *false modesty*—though I have generally observed, that persons, who are quite deficient in that *mauvaise honte*, are seldom overtroubled with the quality itself, of which it is the counterfeit.

By what arts, with *his* pretensions, D. contrived to wriggle himself into a seat in the Academy, I am not acquainted enough with the intrigues of that body (more involved than those of an Italian conclave) to pronounce. It is certain, that neither for love to him, nor out of any respect to his talents, did they elect him. Individually he was obnoxious to them all. I have

heard that, in his passion for attaining this object, he went so far as to go down upon his knees to some of the members, whom he thought least favourable, and beg their suffrage with many tears.

But *death*, which extends the measure of a man's stature to appearance; and *wealth*, which men worship in life and death, which makes giants or punies, and embalms insignificance; called around the exequies of this pigmy Painter the rank, the riches, the fashion of the world. By Academic hands his pall was borne; by the carriages of nobles of the land, and of ambassadors from foreign powers, his bier was followed; and St. Paul's (O worthy casket for the shrine of such a Zeuxis) now holds—ALL THAT WAS MORTAL OF G. D.

SPECIMENS FROM THE WRITINGS OF FULLER, THE CHURCH HISTORIAN

THE writings of Fuller are usually designated by the title of quaint, and with sufficient reason; for such was his natural bias to conceits, that I doubt not upon most occasions it would have been going out of his way to have expressed himself out of them. But his wit is not always a *lumen siccum*, a dry faculty of surprising; on the contrary, his conceits are oftentimes deeply steeped in human feeling and passion. Above all, his way of telling a story, for its eager liveliness, and the perpetual running commentary of the narrator happily blended with the narration, is perhaps unequalled.

As his works are now scarcely perused but by antiquaries, I thought it might not be unacceptable to my readers to present them with some specimens of his manner, in single thoughts and phrases; and in some few passages of greater length, chiefly of a narrative description. I shall arrange them as I casually find them in my book of extracts, without being solicitous to specify the particular work from which they are taken.

Pyramids.—"The Pyramids themselves, doting with age, have forgotten the names of their founders."

Virtue in a short person.—"His soul had but a short diocese to visit, and therefore might the better attend the effectual informing thereof."

Intellect in a very tall one.—"Oft times such who are built four stories high, are observed to have little in their cock-loft."

Naturals.—"Their heads sometimes so little, that there is

no room for wit; sometimes so long, that there is no wit for so much room."

Negroes.—"The image of God cut in ebony."

School-divinity.—"At the first it will be as welcome to thee as a prison, and their very solutions will seem knots unto thee."

Mr. Perkins, the Divine.—"He had a capacious head, with angles winding and roomy enough to lodge all controversial intricacies."

The same.—"He would pronounce the word *Damn* with such an emphasis as left a doleful echo in his auditors' ears a good while after."

Judges in capital cases.—"O let him take heed how he strikes, that hath a dead hand!"

Memory.—"Philosophers place it in the rear of the head, and it seems the mine of memory lies there, because there men naturally dig for it, scratching it when they are at a loss."

Fancy.—"It is the most boundless and restless faculty of the soul; for while the Understanding and the Will are kept, as it were, *in libera custodia* to their objects of *verum et bonum*, the Fancy is free from all engagements: it digs without spade, sails without ship, flies without wings, builds without charges, fights without bloodshed; in a moment striding from the centre to the circumference of the world; by a kind of omnipotency creating and annihilating things in an instant; and things divorced in Nature are married in Fancy as a lawless place."

Infants.—"Some, admiring what motives to mirth infants meet with in their silent and solitary smiles, have resolved, how truly I know not, that then they converse with angels; as indeed such cannot among mortals find any fitter companions."

Music.—"Such is the sociableness of music, it conforms itself to all companies both in mirth and mourning; complying to improve that passion with which it finds the auditors most affected. In a word, it is an invention which might have beseemed a son of Seth to have been the father thereof: though better it was that Cain's great grandchild should have the credit first to find it, than the world the unhappiness longer to have wanted it."

St. Monica.—"Drawing near her death, she sent most pious thoughts as harbingers to heaven, and her soul saw a glimpse of happiness through the chinks of her sickness-broken body." [1]

[1] The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lets in new lights through chinks which time has made.
WALLER.

Mortality.—"To smell to a turf of fresh earth is wholesome for the body, no less are thoughts of mortality cordial to the soul."

Virgin.—"No lordling husband shall at the same time command her presence and distance; to be always near in constant attendance, and always to stand aloof in awful observance."

Elder Brother.—"Is one who made haste to come into the world to bring his parents the first news of male posterity, and is well rewarded for his tidings."

Bishop Fletcher.—"His pride was rather on him than in him, as only gait and gesture deep, not sinking to his heart, though causelessly condemned for a proud man, as who was a *good hypocrite*, and far more humble than he appeared."

Master of Colleges.—"A little allay of dulness in a Master of a College makes him fitter to manage secular affairs."

The Good Yeoman.—"Is a gentleman in ore, whom the next age may see refined."

Good Parent.—"For his love, therein, like a well-drawn picture, he eyes all his children alike."

Deformity in Children.—"This partiality is tyranny, when parents despise those that are deformed; *enough to break those whom God had bowed before.*"

Good Master.—"In correcting his servant he becomes not a slave to his own passion. Not cruelly making new *indentures* of the flesh of his apprentice. He is tender of his servant in sickness and age. If crippled in his service, his house is his hospital. Yet how many throw away those dry bones, out of the which themselves have sucked the marrow!"

Good Widow.—"If she can speak but little good of him [her dead husband] she speaks but little of him. So handsomely folding up her discourse, that his virtues are shewn outwards, and his vices wrapt up in silence; as counting it barbarism to throw dirt on his memory who hath moulds cast on his body."

Horses.—"These are men's wings, wherewith they make much speed. A generous creature a horse is, sensible in some sort of honour; and made most handsome by that which deforms men most—pride."

Martyrdom.—"Heart of oak hath sometime warped a little in the scorching heat of persecution. Their want of true courage herein cannot be excused. Yet many censure them for surrendering up their forts after a long siege, who would have yielded up their own at the first summons. Oh! there is more required to make one valiant, than to call Cranmer or Jewel

coward; as if the fire in Smithfield had been no hotter than what is painted in the Book of Martyrs!"

Text of St. Paul.—"St. Paul saith, let not the sun go down upon your wrath, to carry news to the antipodes in another world of thy revengeful nature. Yet let us take the Apostle's meaning rather than his words, with all possible speed to depose our passion; not understanding him so literally, that we may take leave to be angry till sunset: then might our wrath lengthen with the days; and men in Greenland, where the day lasts above a quarter of a year, have plentiful scope for revenge." [1]

Bishop Brownrig.—"He carried learning enough *in numerato* about him in his pockets for any discourse, and had much more at home in his chests for any serious dispute."

Modest Want.—"Those that with diligence fight against poverty, though neither conquer till death makes it a drawn battle; expect not but prevent their craving of thee: for God forbid the heavens should never rain, till the earth first opens her mouth; seeing *some grounds will sooner burn than chap.*"

Death-bed Temptations.—"The devil is most busy on the last day of his term; and a tenant to be outed cares not what mischief he doth."

Conversation.—"Seeing we are civilised Englishmen, let us not be naked savages in our talk."

Wounded Soldier.—"Halting is the stateliest march of a soldier; and 'tis a brave sight to see the flesh of an ancient as torn as his colours."

Wat Tyler.—"A *misogrammatist*; if a good Greek word may be given to so barbarous a rebel."

Heralds.—"Heralds new mould men's names,—taking from them, adding to them, melting out all the liquid letters, torturing mutes to make them speak, and making vowels dumb,—to bring it to a fallacious *homonomy* at the last, that their names may be the same with those noble houses they pretend to."

Antiquarian Diligence.—"It is most worthy observation, with what diligence he [Camden] inquired after ancient places, making hue and cry after many a city which was run away, and by

[1] This whimsical prevention of a consequence which no one would have thought of deducing,—setting up an absurdum on purpose to hunt it down,—placing guards as it were at the very outposts of possibility,—gravely giving out laws to insanity and prescribing moral fences to distempered intellects, could never have entered into a head less entertainingly constructed than that of Fuller, or Sir Thomas Browne, the very air of whose style the conclusion of this passage most aptly imitates.

certain marks and tokens pursuing to find it; as by the situation on the Roman highways, by just distance from other ancient cities, by some affinity of name, by tradition of the inhabitants, by Roman coins digged up, and by some appearance of ruins. A broken urn is a whole evidence; or an old gate still surviving, out of which the city is run out. Besides, commonly some new spruce town not far off is grown out of the ashes thereof, which yet hath so much natural affection as dutifully to own those reverend ruins for her mother."

Henry de Essex.—"He is too well known in our English Chronicles, being Baron of Raleigh, in Essex, and Hereditary Standard Bearer of England. It happened in the reign of this king [Henry II.] there was a fierce battle fought in Flintshire, at Coleshall, between the English and Welsh, wherein this Henry de Essex *animum et signum simul abjecit,* betwixt traitor and coward, cast away both his courage and banner together, occasioning a great overthrow of English. But he that had the baseness to do, had the boldness to deny the doing of so foul a fact; until he was challenged in combat by Robert de Momford, a knight, eye-witness thereof, and by him overcome in a duel. Whereupon his large inheritance was confiscated to the king, and he himself, *partly thrust, partly going into a convent, hid his head in a cowl, under which, betwixt shame and sanctity, he blushed out the remainder of his life.*"[1]—*Worthies.* Article, *Bedfordshire.*

Sir Edward Harwood, Knt.—"I have read of a bird, which hath a face like, and yet will prey upon, a man; who coming to the water to drink, and finding there by reflection, that he had killed one like himself, pineth away by degrees, and never afterwards enjoyeth itself.[2] Such is in some sort the condition of

[1] The fine imagination of Fuller has done what might have been pronounced impossible: it has given an interest, and a holy character, to coward infamy. Nothing can be more beautiful than the concluding account of the last days, and expiatory retirement, of poor Henry de Essex. The address with which the whole of this little story is told is most consummate: the charm of it seems to consist in a perpetual balance of antitheses not too violently opposed, and the consequent activity of mind in which the reader is kept:—"Betwixt traitor and coward"—"baseness to do, boldness to deny"—"partly thrust, partly going, into a convent"—"betwixt shame and sanctity." The reader by this artifice is taken into a kind of partnership with the writer—his judgment is exercised in settling the preponderance—he feels as if he were consulted as to the issue. But the modern historian flings at once the dead weight of his own judgment into the scale, and settles the matter.

[2] I do not know where Fuller read of this bird; but a more awful and affecting story, and moralising of a story, in Natural History, or rather in that Fabulous Natural History, where poets and mythologists found the

Sir Edward. This accident, that he had killed one in a private quarrel, put a period to his carnal mirth, and was a covering to his eyes all the days of his life. No possible provocations could afterwards tempt him to a duel; and no wonder that one's conscience loathed that whereof he had surfeited. He refused all challenges with more honour than others accepted them; it being well known, that he would set his foot as far in the face of his enemy as any man alive."—*Worthies*. Art. *Lincolnshire*.

Decayed Gentry.—"It happened in the reign of King James, when Henry Earl of Huntingdon was Lieutenant of Leicestershire, that a labourer's son in that county was pressed into the wars; as I take it, to go over with Count Mansfield. The old man at Leicester requested his son might be discharged, as being the only staff of his age, who by his industry maintained him and his mother. The Earl demanded his name, which the man for a long time was loath to tell (as suspecting it a fault for so poor a man to confess the truth), at last he told his name was Hastings. "Cousin Hastings," said the Earl, "we cannot all be top branches of the tree, though we all spring from the same root; your son, my kinsman, shall not be pressed." So good was the meeting of modesty in a poor, with courtesy in an honourable person, and gentry I believe in both. And I have reason to believe, that some who justly own the surnames and blood of Bohuns, Mortimers, and Plantagenets, though ignorant of their own extractions, are hid in the heap of common people, where they find that, under a thatched cottage, which some of their ancestors could not enjoy in a leaded castle,—contentment, with quiet and security."—*Worthies*. Art. *Of Shire-Reeves or Sheriffes*.

Tenderness of Conscience in a Tradesman.—"Thomas Curson, born in Allhallows, Lombard Street, armourer, dwelt without Bishopsgate. It happened that a stage-player borrowed a rusty musket, which had lain long leger in his shop: now though

Phœnix and the Unicorn, and "other strange fowl," is newhere extant, It is a fable which Sir Thomas Browne, if he had heard of it, would have exploded among his Vulgar Errors; but the delight which he would have taken in the discussing of its probabilities, would have shown that the *truth of the fact*, though the avowed object of his search, was not so much the motive which put him upon the investigation, as those hidden affinities and poetical analogies,—those *essential verities* in the application of strange fable, which made him linger with such reluctant delay among the last fading lights of popular tradition; and not seldom to conjure up a superstition, that had been long extinct, from its dusty grave, to inter it himself with greater ceremonies and solemnities of burial.

his part were comical, he therewith acted an unexpected tragedy, killing one of the standers by, the gun casually going off on the stage which he suspected not to be charged. O the difference of divers men in the tenderness of their consciences; some are scarce touched with a wound, whilst others are wounded with a touch therein. This poor armourer was highly afflicted therewith, though done against his will, yea without his knowledge, in his absence, by another, out of mere chance. Hereupon he resolved to give all his estate to pious uses: no sooner had he gotten a round sum, but presently he posted with it in his apron to the Court of Aldermen, and was in pain till by their direction he had settled it for the relief of the poor in his own and other parishes, and disposed of some hundreds of pounds accordingly, as I am credibly informed by the then churchwardens of the said parish. Thus as he conceived himself casually (though at a great distance) to have occasioned the death of one, he was the immediate and direct cause of giving a comfortable living to many."

Burning of Wickliffe's Body by Order of the Council of Constance.—"Hitherto (A.D. 1428] the corpse of John Wickliffe had quietly slept in his grave about forty-one years after his death, till his body was reduced to bones, and his bones almost to dust. For though the earth in the chancel of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, where he was interred, hath not so quick a digestion with the earth of Aceldama, to consume flesh in twenty-four hours, yet such the appetite thereof, and all other English graves, to leave small reversions of a body after so many years. But now such the spleen of the Council of Constance, as they not only cursed his memory as dying an obstinate heretic, but ordered that his bones (with this charitable caution, —if it may be discerned from the bodies of other faithful people,) be taken out of the ground, and thrown far off from any Christian burial. In obedience hereunto, Rich. Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln, Diocesan of Lutterworth, sent his officers (vultures with a quick sight, scent, at a dead carcase) to ungrave him. Accordingly to Lutterworth they come, Sumner, Commissary, Official, Chancellor, Proctors, Doctors, and their servants, (so that the remnant of the body would not hold out a bone amongst so many hands), take what was left out of the grave, and burnt them to ashes, and cast them into Swift, a neighbouring brook, running hard by. *Thus this brook has conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of*

Wickliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over." [1]—Church History.

ROBERT LLOYD

(*An Obituary Notice*)

To dilate in many words upon his character, would be to violate the modest regard due to his memory, who in his lifetime shrunk so anxiously from every species of notice. His constitutional misfortune was an excess of nervous sensibility, which in the purest of hearts produced rather too great a spirit of self-abasement, a perpetual apprehension of not doing what was right. Yet, beyond this tenderness, he seemed absolutely to have no self-regards at all. His eye was single, and ever fixed upon that form of goodness, which he venerated wherever he found it, except in himself. What he was to his parents, and in his family, the newness of their sorrow may make it unseasonable to touch at; his loss, alas! was but one in a complication of domestic afflictions which have fallen so heavy of late upon a very worthy house. But as a friend, the writer of this memorial can witness, that what he once esteemed and loved,

[1] The concluding period of this most lively narrative I will not call a conceit: it is one of the grandest conceptions I ever met with. One feels the ashes of Wickliffe gliding away out of the reach of the Sumners, Commissaries, Officials, Proctors, Doctors, and all the puddering rout of executioners of the impotent rage of the baffled Council: from Swift into Avon, from Avon into Severn, from Severn into the narrow seas, from the narrow seas into the main ocean, where they become the emblem of his doctrine, "dispersed all the world over." Hamlet's tracing the body of Cæsar to the clay that stops a beer barrel is a no less curious pursuit of "ruined mortality"; but it is in an inverse ratio to this: it degrades and saddens us, for one part of our nature at least; but this expands the whole of our nature, and gives to the body a sort of ubiquity,—a diffusion, as far as the actions of its partner can have reach or influence.

I have seen this passage smiled at, and set down as a quaint conceit of old Fuller. But what is not a conceit to those who read it in a temper different from that in which the writer composed it? The most pathetic parts of poetry to cold tempers seem and are nonsense, as divinity was to the Greeks foolishness. When Richard II., meditating on his own utter annihilation as to royalty, cries out,

> "O that I were a mockery king of snow,
> To melt before the sun of Bolingbroke,"

if we had been going on pace for pace with the passion before, this sudden conversion of a strong-felt metaphor into something to be actually realised in nature, like that of Jeremiah, "Oh! that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears," is strictly and strikingly natural; but come unprepared upon it, and it is a conceit: and so is a "head" turned into "waters."

it was an unalterable law of his mind to continue to esteem and love. Absences of years, the discontinuance of correspondence, from whatever cause, for ever so great a length of time, made no difference. It seemed as if the affectionate part of his nature could suffer no abatement. The display of what the world calls shining talents, would have been incompatible with a character like his; but he oftentimes let fall, in his familiar talk, and in his letters, bright and original illustrations of feeling, which might have been mistaken for genius, if his own watchful modest spirit had not constantly interposed to recall and substitute for them some of the ordinary forms of observation, which lay less out of that circle of common sympathy, within which his kind nature delighted to move.

BOOKS WITH ONE IDEA IN THEM

Dull poetry is to me far more oppressive than the same quantity of dullness in prose. The act of attending to the metre is perfectly painful where there is nothing to repay one in the thought. Of heavy prose I can swallow a good dose. I do not know that I was ever deterred from reading through a book which I had begun, supposing the subject to be to my mind, except Patrick's Pilgrim. The freezing, appalling, petrifying dullness of that book is quite astounding. Yet is there one lively image in the preface, which an author in the present day might comfort himself by applying to his reviewers: "If the writer of these pages shall chance to meet with any that shall only study to cavil and pick a quarrel with him, he is prepared beforehand to take no notice of it, nor to be more troubled at their incivility, than a devout hermit is at the ugly faces which the creatures who something resemble men make at him as he is walking through the deserts." An amusing catalogue might be made of books which contain but one good passage. They would be a sort of single-speech Hamiltons; if Balaam's palfrey might not be thought a more apt counterpart to them. Killigrew's play of the Parson's Wedding, which in length of massy dullness exceeds many books, is remarkable for one little spark of liveliness. The languishing fine lady of the piece exclaims most characteristically, upon coming in tired with walking: "I am glad I am come home, for I am e'en as weary with this walking. For God's sake, whereabouts does the pleasure of

walking lie? I swear I have often sought it till I was weary, and yet I could ne'er find it." Charron on Wisdom, a cumbrous piece of formality, which Pope's eulogium lately betrayed me into the perusal of, has one splendid passage; page 138, (I think) English translation. It contrasts the open honours with which we invest the sword, as the means of putting man out of the world, with the concealing and retiring circumstances that accompany his introduction into it. It is a piece of gorgeous and happy eloquence.—What could Pope mean by that line, —"sage Montaigne, or more sage Charron"? Montaigne is an immense treasure-house of observation, anticipating all the discoveries of succeeding essayists. You cannot dip in him without being struck with the aphorism, that there is nothing new under the sun. All the writers on common life since him have done nothing but echo him. You cannot open him without detecting a Spectator, or starting a Rambler; besides that his own character pervades the whole, and binds it sweetly together. Charron is a mere piece of formality, scholastic dry bones, without sinew or living flesh.

WORDSWORTH'S "EXCURSION"

(*A Review*)

The volume before us, as we learn from the Preface, is "a detached portion of an unfinished poem, containing views of man, nature, and society"; to be called the Recluse, as having for its principal subject the "sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement"; and to be preceded by a "record in verse of the origin and progress of the author's own powers, with reference to the fitness which they may be supposed to have conferred for the task." To the completion of this plan we look forward with a confidence which the execution of the finished part is well calculated to inspire.—Meanwhile, in what is before us there is an ample matter for entertainment: for the "Excursion" is not a branch (as might have been suspected) prematurely plucked from the parent tree to gratify an overhasty appetite for applause; but is, in itself, a complete and legitimate production.

It opens with the meeting of the poet with an aged man whom he had known from his schooldays; in plain words, a Scottish pedlar; a man who, though of low origin, had received good learning and impressions of the strictest piety from his

stepfather, a minister and village schoolmaster. Among the hills of Athol, the child is described to have become familiar with the appearances of nature in his occupation as a feeder of sheep; and from her silent influences to have derived a character, meditative, tender, and poetical. With an imagination and feelings thus nourished—his intellect not unaided by books, but those, few, and chiefly of a religious cast—the necessity of seeking a maintenance in riper years, had induced him to make choice of a profession, the *appellation* for which has been gradually declining into contempt, but which formerly designated a class of men, who, journeying in country places, when roads presented less facilities for travelling, and the intercourse between towns and villages was unfrequent and hazardous, became a sort of link of neighbourhood to distant habitations; resembling, in some small measure, in the effects of their periodical returns, the caravan which Thomson so feelingly describes as blessing the cheerless Siberian in its annual visitation with "news of human kind."

In the solitude incident to this rambling life, power had been given him to keep alive that devotedness to nature which he had imbibed in his childhood, together with the opportunity of gaining such notices of persons and things from his intercourse with society, as qualified him to become a "teacher of moral wisdom." With this man, then, in a hale old age, released from the burthen of his occupation, yet retaining much of its active habits, the poet meets, and is by him introduced to a second character—a sceptic—one who had been partially roused from an overwhelming desolation, brought upon him by the loss of wife and children, by the powerful incitement of hope which the French Revolution in its commencement put forth, but who, disgusted with the failure of all its promises, had fallen back into a laxity of faith and conduct which induced at length a total despondence as to the dignity and final destination of his species. In the language of the poet, he

> ———broke faith with those whom he had laid
> In earth's dark chambers.

Yet he describes himself as subject to compunctious visitations from that silent quarter.

> ————Feebly must they have felt,
> Who, in old time, attired with snakes and whips
> The vengeful Furies. Beautiful regards
> Were turned on me—the face of her I loved;
> The wife and mother; pitifully fixing
> Tender reproaches, insupportable!—p. 133.

The conversations with this person, in which the Wanderer asserts the consolatory side of the question against the darker views of human life maintained by his friend, and finally calls to his assistance the experience of a village priest, the third, or rather fourth interlocutor, (for the poet himself is one,) form the groundwork of the "Excursion."

It will be seen by this sketch that the poem is of a didactic nature, and not a fable or story; yet it is not wanting in stories of the most interesting kind,—such as the lovers of Cowper and Goldsmith will recognise as something familiar and congenial to them. We might instance the Ruined Cottage, and the Solitary's own story, in the first half of the work; and the second half, as being almost a continued cluster of narration. But the prevailing charm of the poem, is perhaps, that, conversational as it is in its plan, the dialogue throughout is carried on in the very heart of the most romantic scenery which the poet's native hills could supply; and which, by the perpetual references made to it either in the way of illustration or for variety and pleasurable description's sake, is brought before us as we read. We breathe in the fresh air, as we do while reading Walton's Complete Angler; only the country about us is as much bolder than Walton's as the thoughts and speculations, which form the matter of the poem, exceed the trifling pastime and low-pitched conversation of his humble fishermen. We give the description of the "two huge peaks," which from some other vale peered into that in which the Solitary is entertaining the poet and his companion. "Those," says their host,

> ——————if here you dwelt, would be
> Your prized companions. Many are the notes
> Which in his tuneful course the wind draws forth
> From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and dashing shores;
> And well those lofty brethren bear their part
> In the wild concert: chiefly when the storm
> Rides high; then all the upper air they fill
> With roaring sound, that ceases not to flow,
> Like smoke, along the level of the blast
> In mighty current; theirs, too, is the song
> Of stream and headlong flood that seldom fails;
> And in the grim and breathless hour of noon,
> Methinks that I have heard them echo back
> The thunder's greeting: nor have Nature's laws
> Left them ungifted with a power to yield
> Music of finer frame; a harmony,
> So do I call it, though it be the hand
> Of silence, though there be no voice; the clouds,
> The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns,
> Motions of moonlight, all come thither—touch,
> And have an answer—thither come, and shape

A language not unwelcome to sick hearts,
And idle spirits: there the sun himself
At the calm close of summer's longest day
Rests his substantial orb;—between those heights,
And on the top of either pinnacle,
More keenly than elsewhere in night's blue vault,
Sparkle the stars as of their station proud.
Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man,
Than the mute agent stirring there:—alone
Here do I sit and watch.—p. 84.

To a mind constituted like that of Mr. Wordsworth, the stream, the torrent, and the stirring leaf—seem not merely to suggest associations of deity, but to be a kind of speaking communication with it. He walks through every forest, as through some Dodona; and every bird that flits among the leaves, like that miraculous one [1] in Tasso, but in language more intelligent, reveals to him far higher love-lays. In his poetry nothing in Nature is dead. Motion is synonymous with life. "Beside yon spring," says the Wanderer, speaking of a deserted well, from which, in former times, a poor woman, who died heart-broken, had been used to dispense refreshment to the thirsty traveller,

————beside yon spring I stood,
And eyed its waters, till we seem'd to feel
One sadness, they and I. For them a bond
Of brotherhood is broken; time has been
When every day the touch of human hand
Dislodged the natural sleep that binds them up
In mortal stillness.—p. 27.

To such a mind, we say—call it strength or weakness—if weakness, assuredly a fortunate one—the visible and audible things of creation present, not dim symbols, or curious emblems, which they have done at all times to those who have been gifted with the poetical faculty; but revelations and quick insights into the life within us, the pledge of immortality:

————the whispering air
Sends inspiration from her shadowy heights,
And blind recesses of the cavern'd rocks:
The little rills, and waters numberless,
Inaudible by day-light.

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[1] With party-coloured plumes, and purple bill,
A wondrous bird among the rest there flew,
That in plain speech sung love-lays loud and shrill;
Her leden was like human language true;
So much she talk'd and with such wit and skill,
That strange it seemèd how much good she knew.
Fairfax's Translation.

"I have seen," the poet says, and the illustration is an happy one:

> ——————I have seen
> A curious child, applying to his ear
> The convolutions of a smooth-lipp'd shell,
> To which, in silence hush'd, his very soul
> Listen'd intensely, and his countenance soon
> Brighten'd with joy; for murmurings from within
> Were heard—sonorous cadences! whereby,
> To his belief, the monitor express'd
> Mysterious union with its native sea.
> Even such a shell the universe itself
> Is to the ear of faith; and doth impart
> Authentic tidings of invisible things:
> Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
> And central peace subsisting at the heart
> Of endless agitation.—p. 191.

Sometimes this harmony is imaged to us by an echo; and in one instance, it is with such transcendent beauty set forth by a shadow and its corresponding substance, that it would be a sin to cheat our readers at once of so happy an illustration of the poet's system, and so fair a proof of his descriptive powers.

> Thus having reach'd a bridge, that over-arch'd
> The hasty rivulet where it lay becalmed
> In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw
> A two-fold image; on a grassy bank
> A snow-white ram, and in the chrystal flood
> Another and the same! Most beautiful,
> On the green turf with his imperial front,
> Shaggy and bold, and wreathed horns superb,
> The breathing creature stood; as beautiful,
> Beneath him, show'd his shadowy counterpart.
> Each had his glowing mountains, each his sky,
> And each seem'd centre of his own fair world;
> Antipodes unconscious of each other,
> Yet, in partition, with their several spheres,
> Blended in perfect stillness, to our sight!—p. 407.

Combinations, it is confessed, "like those reflected in that quiet pool," cannot be lasting: it is enough for the purpose of the poet, if they are felt.—They are at least his system; and his readers, if they reject them for their creed, may receive them merely as poetry. In him, *faith*, in friendly alliance and conjunction with the religion of his country, appears to have grown up, fostered by meditation and lonely communions with Nature —an internal principle of lofty consciousness, which stamps upon his opinions and sentiments (we were almost going to say) the character of an expanded and generous Quakerism.

From such a creed we should expect unusual results; and, when applied to the purposes of consolation, more touching

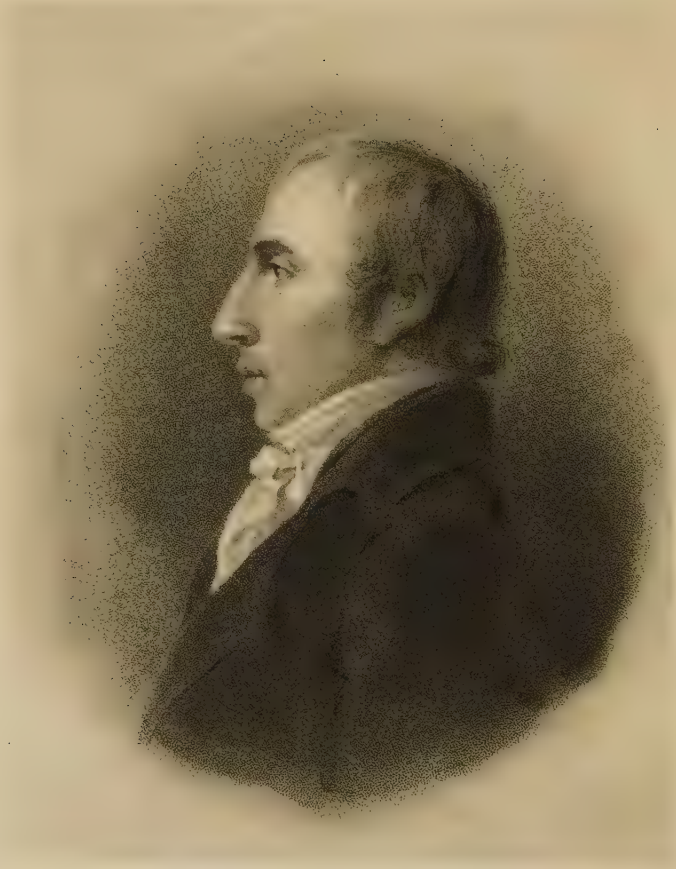
considerations than from the mouth of common teachers. The finest speculation of this sort perhaps in the poem before us, is the notion of the thoughts which may sustain the spirit, while they crush the frame of the sufferer, who from loss of objects of love by death, is commonly supposed to pine away under a broken heart.

> ——If there be, whose tender frames have drooped
> Even to the dust, apparently, through weight
> Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power
> An agonising spirit to transmute,
> Infer not hence a hope from those withheld
> When wanted most; a confidence impaired
> So pitiably, that, having ceased to see
> With bodily eyes, they are borne down by love
> Of what is lost, and perish through regret.
> Oh! no, full oft the *innocent sufferer sees*
> *Too clearly ; feels too vividly ; and longs*
> *To realise the vision with intense*
> *And over constant yearning ;*—there, there lies
> The excess, by which the balance is destroy'd.
> Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,
> This vital warmth too cold, these visual orbs,
> Though inconceivably endowed, too dim
> For any passion of the soul that leads
> To extasy; and, all the crooked paths
> Of time and change disdaining, takes its course
> Along the line of limitless desires.—p. 148.

With the same modifying and incorporating power, he tells us,—

> Within the soul a faculty abides
> That with interpositions, which would hide
> And darken, so can deal, that they become
> Contingencies of pomp; and serve to exalt
> Her native brightness. As the ample moon,
> In the deep stillness of a summer eve,
> Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,
> Burns like an unconsuming fire of light,
> In the green trees; and, kindling on all sides
> Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil
> Into a substance glorious as her own,
> Yea, with her own incorporated, by power
> Capacious and serene. Like power abides
> In man's celestial spirit; Virtue thus
> Sets forth and magnifies herself; thus feeds
> A calm, a beautiful, and silent fire,
> From the incumbrances of mortal life,
> From error, disappointment, nay, from guilt;
> And sometimes, so relenting justice wills,
> From palpable oppressions of despair.—p. 188.

This is high poetry; though (as we have ventured to lay the basis of the author's sentiments in a sort of liberal Quakerism) from some parts of it, others may, with more plausibility, object to the appearance of a kind of Natural Methodism: we could



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

From a drawing by Hancock (1798).

See p. 275

have wished therefore that the tale of Margaret had been postponed, till the reader had been strengthened by some previous acquaintance with the author's theory, and not placed in the front of the poem, with a kind of ominous aspect, beautifully tender as it is. It is a tale of a cottage, and its female tenant, gradually decaying together, while she expected the return of one whom poverty and not unkindness had driven from her arms. We trust ourselves only with the conclusion—

> ————Nine tedious years;
> From their first separation, nine long years,
> She lingered in unquiet widowhood,
> A wife and widow. I have heard, my friend,
> That in yon arbour oftentimes she sate
> Alone, through half the vacant Sabbath day;
> And, if a dog pass'd by, she still would quit
> The shade and look abroad. On this old bench
> For hours she sate; and evermore her eye
> Was busy in the distance, shaping things
> That made her heart beat quick. You see that path;
> There to and fro she paced through many a day
> Of the warm summer, from a belt of hemp
> That girt her waist, spinning the long-drawn thread
> With backward steps. Yet ever as there pass'd
> A man whose garments show'd the soldier's red,[1]
> The little child who sate to turn the wheel
> Ceased from his task; and she with faultering voice
> Made many a fond inquiry; and when they,
> Whose presence gave no comfort were gone by,
> Her heart was still more sad. And by yon gate,
> That bars the traveller's road, she often stood,
> And, when a stranger horseman came, the latch
> Would lift, and in his face look wistfully;
> Most happy, if from aught discovered there
> Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat
> The same sad question. Meanwhile her poor hut
> Sank to decay: for *he* was gone, whose hand,
> At the first nipping of October frost,
> Closed up each chink, and with fresh bands of straw
> Checquered the green-grown thatch. And so she lived
> Through the long winter, reckless and alone;
> Until her house by frost, and thaw, and rain
> Was sapp'd; and, while she slept, the nightly damps
> Did chill her breast; and in the stormy day
> Her tatter'd clothes were ruffled by the wind,
> Even at the side of her own fire. Yet still
> She loved this wretched spot, nor would for worlds
> Have parted hence: and still that length of road,
> And this rude bench, one torturing hope endeared,
> Fast rooted at her heart: and here, my friend,
> In sickness she remained; and here she died,
> Last human tenant of these ruin'd walls!—p. 46.

The fourth book, entitled "Despondency Corrected," we consider as the most valuable portion of the poem. For moral

[1] Her husband had enlisted for a soldier.

grandeur; for wide scope of thought and a long train of lofty imagery; for tender personal appeals; and a *versification* which we feel we ought to notice, but feel it also so involved in the poetry, that we can hardly mention it as a distinct excellence; it stands without competition among our didactic and descriptive verse. The general tendency of the argument (which we might almost affirm to be the leading moral of the poem) is to abate the pride of the calculating *understanding*, and to reinstate the *imagination* and the *affections* in those seats from which modern philosophy has laboured but too successfully to expel them.

"Life's autumn past," says the grey-haired Wanderer,

> ———I stand on winter's verge,
> And daily lose what I desire to keep;
> Yet rather would I instantly decline
> To the traditionary sympathies
> Of a most rustic ignorance, and take
> A fearful apprehension from the owl
> Or death-watch—and as readily rejoice
> If two auspicious magpies crossed my way—
> This rather would I do than see and hear
> The repetitions wearisome of sense,
> Where soul is dead and feeling hath no place.—p. 168.

In the same spirit, those illusions of the imaginative faculty to which the peasantry in solitary districts are peculiarly subject, are represented as the kindly ministers of *conscience*:

> ————————with whose service charged
> They come and go, appear and disappear;
> Diverting evil purposes, remorse
> Awakening, chastening an intemperate grief,
> Or pride of heart abating.

Reverting to the more distant ages of the world, the operation of that same faculty in producing the several fictions of Chaldean, Persian, and Grecian idolatry, is described with such seductive power, that the Solitary, in good earnest, seems alarmed at the tendency of his own argument.—Notwithstanding his fears, however, there is one thought so uncommonly fine, relative to the spirituality which lay hid beneath the gross material forms of Greek worship, in metal or stone, that we cannot resist the allurement of transcribing it—

> ———Triumphant o'er this pompous show
> Of art, this palpable array of sense,
> On every side encountered; in despite
> Of the gross fictions chanted in the streets
> By wandering rhapsodists; and in contempt
> Of doubt and bold denials hourly urged
> Amid the wrangling schools—a Spirit hung.

Beautiful region! o'er thy towns and farms,
Statues and temples, and memorial tombs;
And emanations were perceived; and acts
Of immortality, in Nature's course,
Exemplified by mysteries, that were felt
As bonds, on grave philosopher imposed
And armed warrior; and in every grove
A gay or pensive tenderness prevailed,
When piety more awful had relaxed.
"*Take, running river, take these locks of mine*—"
Thus would the votary say—"*this severed hair,*
My vow fulfilling, do I here present,
Thankful for my beloved child's return,
Thy banks, Cephisus, he again hath trod,
Thy murmurs heard; and drunk the chrystal lymph
With which thou dost refresh the thirsty lip,
And moisten all day long these flowery fields."
And doubtless, sometimes, when the hair was shed
Upon the flowing stream, a thought arose
Of life continuous, Being unimpair'd;
That hath been, is, and where it was and is
There shall be; seen, and heard, and felt and known,
And recognised—existence unexposed
To the blind walk of mortal accident;
From diminution safe and weakening age;
While man grows old, and dwindles and decays;
And countless generations of mankind
Depart, and leave no vestige where they trod.—p. 174.

In discourse like this the first day passes away.—The second (for this almost dramatic poem takes up the action of two summer days) is varied by the introduction of the village priest; to whom the Wanderer resigns the office of chief speaker, which had been yielded to his age and experience on the first. The conference is begun at the gate of the church-yard; and after some natural speculations concerning death and immortality —and the custom of funereal and sepulchral observances, as deduced from a feeling of immortality—certain doubts are proposed respecting the quantity of moral worth existing in the world, and in that mountainous district in particular. In the resolution of these doubts, the priest enters upon a most affecting and singular strain of narration, derived from the graves around him. Pointing to hillock after hillock, he gives short histories of their tenants, disclosing their humble virtues, and touching with tender hand upon their frailties.

Nothing can be conceived finer than the manner of introducing these tales. With heaven above his head, and the mouldering turf at his feet—standing betwixt life and death—he seems to maintain that spiritual relation which he bore to his living flock, in its undiminished strength, even with their ashes; and to be in his proper cure, or diocese, among the dead.

We might extract powerful instances of pathos from these tales—the story of Ellen in particular—but their force is in combination, and in the circumstances under which they are introduced. The traditionary anecdote of the Jacobite and Hanoverian, as less liable to suffer by transplanting, and as affording an instance of that finer species of humour, that thoughtful playfulness in which the author more nearly perhaps than in any other quality resembles Cowper, we shall lay (at least a part of it) before our readers. It is the story of a whig who, having wasted a large estate in election contests, retired "beneath a borrowed name" to a small town among these northern mountains, when a Caledonian laird, a follower of the house of Stuart, who had fled his country after the overthrow at Culloden, returning with the return of lenient times, had also fixed his residence.

> ——————Here, then, they met,
> Those doughty champions; flaming Jacobite,
> And sullen Hanoverian! you might think
> That losses and vexations, less severe
> Than those which they had severally sustained,
> Would have inclined each to abate his zeal
> For his ungrateful cause; no,—I have heard
> My reverend father tell that, mid the calm
> Of that small town encountering thus, they filled
> Daily its bowling-green with harmless strife,
> Plagued with uncharitable thoughts the church,
> And vex'd the market-place! But in the breasts
> Of these opponents gradually was wrought,
> With little change of general sentiment,
> Such change towards each other, that their days
> By choice were spent in constant fellowship;
> And, if at times they fretted with the yoke,
> Those very bickerings made them love it more.
> A favourite boundary to their lengthen'd walks
> This church-yard was. And, whether they had come
> Treading their path in sympathy, and linked
> In social converse, or by some short space
> Discreetly parted to preserve the peace,
> One spirit seldom failed to extend its sway
> Over both minds, when they awhile had mark'd
> The visible quiet of this holy ground
> And breathed its soothing air.——
>
> There live who yet remember to have seen
> Their courtly figures—seated on a stump
> Of an old yew, their favourite resting place.
> But, as the remnant of the long-lived tree
> Was disappearing by a swift decay,
> They with joint care determined to erect
> Upon its site, a dial, which should stand,
> For public use; and also might survive
> As their own private monument; for this
> Was the particular spot, in which they wished

(And Heaven was pleased to accomplish their desire)
That, undivided, their remains should lie.
So, where the mouldered tree had stood, was raised
Yon structure, framing, with the ascent of steps
That to the decorated pillar lead,
A work of art, more sumptuous, as might seem,
Than suits this place; yet built in no proud scorn
Of rustic homeliness; they only aimed
To ensure for it respectful guardianship.
Around the margin of the plate, whereon
The shadow falls, to note the stealthy hours,
Winds an inscriptive legend.—
At these words
Thither we turned; and gathered, as we read,
The appropriate sense, in Latin numbers couched.
"Time flies; it is his melancholy task
To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,
And re-produce the troubles he destroys.
But, while his business thus is occupied,
Discerning mortal! do thou serve the will
Of Time's eternal Master, and that peace,
Which the world wants, shall be for thee confirmed."

pp. 270–3.

The causes which have prevented the poetry of Mr. Wordsworth from attaining its full share of popularity are to be found in the boldness and originality of his genius. The times are past when a poet could securely follow the direction of his own mind into whatever tracts it might lead. A writer, who would be popular, must timidly coast the shore of prescribed sentiment and sympathy. He must have just as much more of the imaginative faculty than his readers, as will serve to keep their apprehensions from stagnating, but not so much as to alarm their jealousy. He must not think or feel too deeply.

If he has had the fortune to be bred in the midst of the most magnificent objects of creation, he must not have given away his heart to them; or if he have, he must conceal his love, or not carry his expressions of it beyond that point of rapture, which the occasional tourist thinks it not overstepping decorum to betray, or the limit which that gentlemanly spy upon Nature, the picturesque traveller, has vouchsafed to countenance. He must do this, or be content to be thought an enthusiast.

If from living among simple mountaineers, from a daily intercourse with them, not upon the footing of a patron, but in the character of an equal, he has detected, or imagines that he has detected, through the cloudy medium of their unlettered discourse, thoughts and apprehensions not vulgar; traits of patience and constancy, love unwearied, and heroic endurance, not unfit (as he may judge) to be made the subject of verse, he will be deemed a man of perverted genius by the philanthropist

who, conceiving of the peasantry of his country only as objects of a pecuniary sympathy, starts at finding them elevated to a level of humanity with himself, having their own loves, enmities, cravings, aspirations, etc., as much beyond his faculty to believe, as his beneficence to supply.

If from a familiar observation of the ways of children, and much more from a retrospect of his own mind when a child, he has gathered more reverential notions of that state than fall to the lot of ordinary observers, and, escaping from the dissonant wranglings of men, has tuned his lyre, though but for occasional harmonies, to the milder utterance of that soft age,—his verses shall be censured as infantile by critics who confound poetry "having children for its subject" with poetry that is "childish," and who, having themselves perhaps never been *children*, never having possessed the tenderness and docility of that age, know not what the soul of a child is—how apprehensive! how imaginative! how religious!

We have touched upon some of the causes which we conceive to have been unfriendly to the author's former poems. We think they do not apply in the same force to the one before us. There is in it more of uniform elevation, a wider scope of subject, less of manner, and it contains none of those starts and imperfect shapings which in some of this author's smaller pieces offended the weak, and gave scandal to the perverse. It must indeed be approached with seriousness. It has in it much of that quality which "draws the devout, deterring the profane." Those who hate the Paradise Lost will not love this poem. The steps of the great master are discernible in it; not in direct imitation or injurious parody, but in the following of the spirit, in free homage and generous subjection.

One objection it is impossible not to foresee. It will be asked, why put such eloquent discourse in the mouth of a pedlar? It might be answered that Mr. Wordsworth's plan required a character in humble life to be the organ of his philosophy. It was in harmony with the system and scenery of his poem. We read Piers Plowman's Creed, and the lowness of the teacher seems to add a simple dignity to the doctrine. Besides, the poet has bestowed an unusual share of education upon him. Is it too much to suppose that the author, at some early period of his life, may himself have known such a person, a man endowed with sentiments above his situation, another Burns; and that the dignified strains which he has attributed to the Wanderer may be no more than recollections of his conversa-

tion, heightened only by the amplification natural to poetry, or the lustre which imagination flings back upon the objects and companions of our youth? After all, if there should be found readers willing to admire the poem, who yet feel scandalised at a *name*, we would advise them, wherever it occurs, to substitute silently the word *Palmer*, or *Pilgrim*, or any less offensive designation, which shall connect the notion of sobriety in heart and manners with the experience and privileges which a wayfaring life confers.

ON THE POETICAL WORKS OF GEORGE WITHER

The poems of G. Wither are distinguished by a hearty homeliness of manner, and a plain moral speaking. He seems to have passed his life in one continued act of an innocent self-pleasing. That which he calls his *Motto* is a continued self-eulogy of two thousand lines, yet we read it to the end without any feeling of distaste, almost without a consciousness that we have been listening all the while to a man praising himself. There are none of the cold particles in it, the hardness and self-ends which render vanity and egotism hateful. He seems to be praising another person, under the mask of self; or rather we feel that it was indifferent to him where he found the virtue which he celebrates; whether another's bosom, or his own, were its chosen receptacle. His poems are full, and this in particular is one downright confession, of a generous self-seeking. But by self he sometimes means a great deal,—his friends, his principles, his country, the human race.

Whoever expects to find in the satirical pieces of this writer any of those peculiarities which pleased him in the satires of Dryden or Pope, will be grievously disappointed. Here are no high-finished characters, no nice traits of individual nature, few or no personalities. The game run down is coarse general vice, or folly as it appears in classes. A liar, a drunkard, a coxcomb, is *stript and whipt*; no Shaftesbury, no Villiers, or Wharton, is curiously anatomised, and read upon. But to a well-natured mind there is a charm of moral sensibility running through them, which amply compensates the want of those luxuries. Wither seems everywhere bursting with a love of goodness, and a hatred of all low and base actions. At this day it is hard to discover what parts of the poem here particularly

alluded to, *Abuses Stript and Whipt*, could have occasioned the imprisonment of the author. Was Vice in High Places more suspicious than now? had she more power; or more leisure to listen after ill reports? That a man should be convicted of a libel when he named no names but Hate, and Envy, and Lust, and Avarice, is like one of the indictments in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, where Faithful is arraigned for having "railed on our noble Prince Beelzebub, and spoken contemptibly of his honourable friends, the Lord Old Man, the Lord Carnal Delight, and the Lord Luxurious." What unlucky jealousy could have tempted the great men of those days to appropriate such innocent abstractions to themselves!

Wither seems to have contemplated to a degree of idolatry his own possible virtue. He is for ever anticipating persecution and martyrdom; fingering, as it were, the flames, to try how he can bear them. Perhaps his premature defiance sometimes made him obnoxious to censures which he would otherwise have slipped by.

The homely versification of these Satires is not likely to attract in the present day. It is certainly not such as we should expect from a poet "soaring in the high region of his fancies, with his garland and his singing robes about him"[1]; nor is it such as he has shown in his *Philarete*, and in some parts of his *Shepherds Hunting*. He seems to have adopted this dress with voluntary humility, as fittest for a moral teacher, as our divines chuse sober grey or black; but in their humility consists their sweetness. The deepest tone of moral feeling in them, (though all throughout is weighty, earnest and passionate) is in those pathetic injunctions against shedding of blood in quarrels, in the chapter entitled *Revenge*. The story of his own forbearance, which follows, is highly interesting. While the Christian sings his own victory over Anger, the Man of Courage cannot help peeping out to let you know that it was some higher principle than *fear* which counselled this forbearance.

Whether encaged, or roaming at liberty, Wither never seems to have abated a jot of that free spirit, which sets its mark upon his writings, as much as a predominant feature of independence impresses every page of our late glorious Burns; but the elder poet wraps his proof-armour closer about him, the other wears his too much outwards; he is thinking too much of annoying the foe to be quite easy within; the spiritual defences of Wither are a perpetual source of inward sunshine, the magnanimity

[1] Milton.

of the modern is not without its alloy of soreness, and a sense of injustice, which seems perpetually to gall and irritate. Wither was better skilled in the "sweet uses of adversity"; he knew how to extract the "precious jewel" from the head of the "toad," without drawing any of the "ugly venom" along with it.—The prison notes of Wither are finer than the wood notes of most of his poetical brethren. The description in the Fourth Eglogue of his *Shepherds Hunting* (which was composed during his imprisonment in the Marshalsea) of the power of the Muse to extract pleasure from common objects, has been oftener quoted, and is more known, than any part of his writings. Indeed the whole Eglogue is in a strain so much above not only what himself, but almost what any other poet has written, that he himself could not help noticing it; he remarks, that his spirits had been raised higher than they were wont, "through the love of poesy." The praises of Poetry have been often sung in ancient and in modern times; strange powers have been ascribed to it of influence over animate and inanimate auditors; its force over fascinated crowds has been acknowledged; but, before Wither, no one ever celebrated its power *at home*, the wealth and the strength which this divine gift confers upon its possessor. Fame, and that too after death, was all which hitherto the poets had promised themselves from their art. It seems to have been left to Wither to discover that poetry was a present possession, as well as a rich reversion; and that the Muse had promise of both lives, of this, and of that which was to come.

The *Mistress of Philarete* is in substance a panegyric protracted through several thousand lines in the mouth of a single speaker, but diversified, so as to produce an almost dramatic effect, by the artful introduction of some ladies, who are rather auditors than interlocutors in the scene; and of a boy, whose singing furnishes pretence for an occasional change of metre: though the seven-syllable line, in which the main part of it is written, is that in which Wither has shown himself so great a master, that I do not know that I am always thankful to him for the exchange.

Wither has chosen to bestow upon the lady whom he commends the name of Arete, or Virtue; and, assuming to himself the character of Philarete, or Lover of Virtue, there is a sort of propriety in that heaped measure of perfections, which he attributes to this partly real, partly allegorical, personage. Drayton before him, had shadowed his mistress under the name

of Idea, or Perfect Pattern, and some of the old Italian love-strains are couched in such religious terms as to make it doubtful, whether it be a mistress, or Divine Grace, which the poet is addressing.

In this poem (full of beauties) there are two passages of pre-eminent merit. The first is where the lover, after a flight of rapturous commendation, expresses his wonder why all men that are about his mistress, even to her very servants, do not view her with the same eyes that he does.

Sometime I do admire
All men burn not with desire:
Nay, I muse her servants are not
Pleading love; but O! they dare not.
And I therefore wonder, why
They do not grow sick and die.
Sure they would do so, but that,
By the ordinance of fate,
There is some concealed thing,
So each gazer limiting,
He can see no more of merit,
Then beseems his worth and spirit.
For in her a grace there shines,
That o'er-daring thoughts confines,
Making worthless men despair
To be loved of one so fair.
Yea, the destinies agree,
Some *good judgments* blind should be,
And not gain the power of knowing
Those rare beauties in her growing.
Reason doth as much imply:
For, if every judging eye,
Which beholdeth her, should there
Find what excellencies are,
All, o'ercome by those perfections,
Would be captive to affections.
So, in happiness unblest,
She for lovers should not rest.

The other is, where he has been comparing her beauties to gold, and stars, and the most excellent things in nature; and, fearing to be accused of hyperbole, the common charge against poets, vindicates himself by boldly taking upon him, that these comparisons are no hyperboles; but that the best things in nature do, in a lover's eye, fall short of those excellencies which he adores in her.

What pearls, what rubies can
Seem so lovely fair to man,
As her lips whom he doth love,
When in sweet discourse they move,
Or her lovelier teeth, the while
She doth bless him with a smile?

Stars indeed fair creatures be;
Yet amongst us where is he
Joys not more the whilst he lies
Sunning in his mistress' eyes.
Than in all the glimmering light
Of a starry winter's night?
Note the beauty of an eye—
And if aught you praise it by
Leave such passion in your mind,
Let my reason's eye be blind.
Mark if ever red or white
Any where gave such delight,
As when they have taken place
In a worthy woman's face.

* * * * *

I must praise her as I may,
Which I do my own rude way,
Sometimes setting forth her glories
By unheard-of allegories—etc.

To the measure in which these lines are written the wits of Queen Anne's days contemptuously gave the name of Namby Pamby, in ridicule of Ambrose Philips, who has used it in some instances, as in the lines of Cuzzoni, to my feeling at least, very deliciously; but Wither, whose darling measure it seems to have been, may show, that in skilful hands it is capable of expressing the subtilest movements of passion. So true it is, which Drayton seems to have felt, that it is the poet who modifies the metre, not the metre the poet; in his own words, that

It's possible to climb;
To kindle, or to slake;
Altho' in Skelton's rhime. [1]

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[1] A long line is a line we are long repeating. In the *Shepherds Hunting* take the following:

If thy verse doth bravely tower,
As she makes wing, she gets power;
Yet the higher she doth soar,
She's affronted still the more,
'Till she to the high'st hath past,
Then she rests with fame at last.

What longer measure can go beyond the majesty of this! what Alexandrine is half so long in pronouncing or expresses *labor slowly but strongly surmounting difficulty* with the life with which it is done in the second of these lines? or what metre could go beyond these from *Philarete*—

Her true beauty leaves behind
Apprehensions in my mind
Of more sweetness, than all art
Or inventions can impart.
Thoughts too deep to be express'd,
And too strong to be suppress'd.

"FALSTAFF'S LETTERS"

"*Original Letters etc., of Sir John Falstaff and his Friends; now first made public by a Gentleman, a descendant of Dame Quickly, from genuine MSS. which have been in the possession of the Quickly Family, near four hundred years.* London, Robinsons, 1796"

A COPY of this work sold at the Roxburgh sale for five guineas. We have both before and since that time picked it up at stalls for eighteen pence. Reader, if you shall ever light upon a copy in the same way, we counsel you to buy it. We are deceived if there be not in it much of the true Shakspearian stuff. We present you with a few of the Letters, which may speak for themselves:

FALSTAFF TO THE PRINCE

"I pr'ythee, Hal, lend me thy 'kerchief. An thy unkindness have not started more salt gouts down my poor old cheek, than my good rapier hath of blood from foeman's gashes in five and thirty years' service, then am I a very senseless mummy. I squander away in drinkings monies belonging to the soldiery! I do deny it—they have had part—the surplus is gone in charity—accuse the parish officers—make them restore—the whoreson warders do now put on the cloak of supplication at the church doors, intercepting gentlemen for charity, forsooth!—'Tis a robbery, a villainous robbery! to come upon a gentleman reeking with piety, God's book in his hand, brimfull of the sacrament! Thou knowest, Hal, as I am but man, I dare in some sort leer at the plate and pass, but as I have the body and blood of Christ within me, could I do it? An I did not make an oblation of a matter of ten pound after the battle of Shrewsbury, in humble gratitude for thy safety, Hal, then am I the veriest transgressor denounced in God's code. But I'll see them damned ere I'll be charitable again. Let 'em coin the plate—let them coin the holy chalice." * * * * * *

THE SAME TO THE SAME

"Ha! ha! ha! And dost thou think I would not offer up ten pound for thee? yea, a hundred—more—but take heed of displeasing in thy sacrifice. Cain did bring a kid, yea, a firstling

upon the altar, and the blaze ascended not. Abel did gather simple herbs, penny-royal, Hal, and mustard, a fourpenny matter, and the odour was grateful. I had ten pound for the holy offertory—mine ancient Pistol doth know it—but the angel did arrest my hand. Could I go beyond the word?—the angel which did stretch forth his finger, lest the good patriarch should slay his son.—That Ned Poins hath more colours than a jay, more abuse than a taught pie, and for wit—the cuckow's dam may be Fool of the Court to him. I lie down at Shrewsbury out of base fear! I melt into roods, acres, and poles! I tell thee what, Hal, there's not a subject in the land hath half my temperance of valour.—Did I not see thee combating the man-queller, Hotspur; yea, in peril of subduement? Was it for me to lose my sweet Hal without a thrust, having my rapier, my habergion, my good self about me? I did lie down in the hope of sherking him in the rib—four drummers and a fifer did help me to the ground:—didst thou not mark how I did leer upon thee from beneath my buckler? That Poins hath more scurrility than is in an whole flock of disquieted geese.

"For the rebels I did conceal, thou should'st give me laud. I did think thou wert already encompassed with more enemies than the resources of man could prevent overwhelming thee: yea, that thou wert the dove on the waters of Ararat, and didst lack a resting-place. Was it for me to heap to thy manifold disquiets? Was it for me to fret thee with the advice of more enemies than thou didst already know of? I could not take their lives, and therefore did I take their monies. I did fine them, lest they should scape, Hal, thou dost understand me, without chastisement; yea, I fined them for a punishment. They did make oath on the point of my sword to be true men:—an the rogues forswore themselves, and joined the Welchman, let them look to it—'tis no 'peachment of my virtue." * * * *

AGAIN

"Oh! I am sitting on a nest of the most unfledged cuckows that ever brooded under the wing of hawk. Thou must know, Hal, I had note of a good hale recruit or two in this neighbourhood. In other shape came I not; look to it, Master Shallow, that in other shape I depart not. But I know thou art ever all desire to be admitted a Fellow Commoner in a jest. Robert Shallow, Esq., judgeth the hamlet of Cotswold. Doth not the

name of judge horribly chill thee? With Aaron's rod in his hand, he hath the white beard of Moses on his chin. In good-sooth his perpetual countenance is not unlike what thou wouldst conceit of the momentary one of the lunatic Jew, when he tumbled God's tables from the mount. He hath a quick busy gait—more of this upright Judge (perpendicular as a pikeman's weapon, Hal,) anon. I would dispatch with these Bardolph; but the knave's hands—(I cry thee mercy) his mouth is full in preventing desertion among my recruits. An every liver among them haven't stood me in three and forty shilling, then am I a naughty escheator. I tell thee what, Hal, I'd fight against my conscience for never a Prince in Christendom but thee.—Oh! this is a most damnable cause, and the rogues know it—they'll drink nothing but sack of three and two pence a gallon; and I enlist me none but tall puissant fellows that would quaff me up Fleet-ditch, were it filled with sack—picked men, Hal—such as will shake my Lord of York's mitre. I pray thee, sweet lad, make speed—thou shalt see glorious deeds."

How say you, reader, do not these inventions smack of East-cheap? Are they not nimble, forgetive, evasive? Is not the humour of them elaborate, cogitabund, fanciful? Carry they not the true image and superscription of the father which begat them? Are they not steeped all over in character—subtle, profound, unctuous? Is not here the very effigies of the Knight? Could a counterfeit *Jack Falstaff* come by these conceits? Or are you, reader, one who delights to drench his mirth in tears? You are, or, peradventure, have been a lover; a "dismissed bachelor," perchance, one that is "lass-lorn." Come, then, and weep over the dying bed of such a one as thyself. Weep with us the death of poor *Abraham Slender*.

DAVY TO SHALLOW

"Master Abram is dead, gone, your Worship, dead! Master Abram! Oh! good your Worship, a's gone. A' never throve since a' came from Windsor—'twas his death. I called him rebel, your Worship—but a' was all subject—a' was subject to any babe, as much as a King—a' turned, *like as it were the latter end of a lover's lute*—a' was all peace and resignment—a' took delight in nothing but his Book of Songs and Sonnets—a' would go to the Stroud side under the large beech tree, and sing, 'till 'twas quite pity of our lives to mark him; for his chin grew as

long as a muscle.—Oh! a' sung his soul and body quite away—a' was lank as any greyhound, and had such a scent! I hid his love-songs among your Worship's law-books; for I thought, if a' could not get at them, it might be to his quiet; but a' snuffed 'em out in a moment. Good your Worship, have the wise woman of Brentford secured—Master Abram may have been conjured—Peter Simple says, a' never looked up after a' sent for the wise woman.—Marry, a' was always given to look down afore his elders; a' might do it, a' was given to it—your Worship knows it; but then 'twas peak and pert with him, marry, in the turn of his heel.—A' died, your Worship, just about one, at the crow of the cock.—I thought how it was with him; for a' talked as quick, aye, marry, as glib as your Worship; and a' smiled, and looked at his own nose, and called 'Sweet Ann Page.' I asked him if a' would eat—so a' bade us commend him to his cousin Robert (a' never called your Worship so before), and bad us get hot meat, for a' would not say 'nay' to Ann again.[1] But a' never lived to touch it—a' began all in a moment to sing 'Lovers all, a Madrigall.' 'Twas the only song Master Abram ever learnt out of book, and clean by heart, your Worship—and so a' sung and smiled, and looked askew at his own nose, and sung, and sung on, till his breath waxed shorter, and shorter, and shorter, and a' fell into a struggle and died. Alice Short-cake craves, she may make his shroud." * * * * * * * * * * *

Should these specimens fail to rouse your curiosity to see the whole, it may be to your loss, gentle reader, but it will give small pain to the spirit of him that wrote this little book; my fine-tempered friend, J. W.—for not in authorship, or the spirit of authorship, but from the fullness of a young soul, newly kindling at the Shakspearian flame, and bursting to be delivered of a rich exuberance of conceits,—I had almost said *kindred with those of the full Shakspearian genius itself*—were these letters dictated. We remember when the inspiration came upon him; when the plays of Henry the Fourth were first put into his hands. We think at our recommendation he read them, rather late in life, though still he was but a youth. He may have forgotten, but we cannot, the pleasant evenings which ensued at the Boar's Head (as we called our tavern, though in reality the sign was not that, nor the street Eastcheap, for that honoured place of resort has long since passed away) when over our pottle of sherris he would talk you nothing but pure *Falstaff* the long

[1] Vide *Merry Wives of Windsor*, latter part of 1st scene, 1st act.

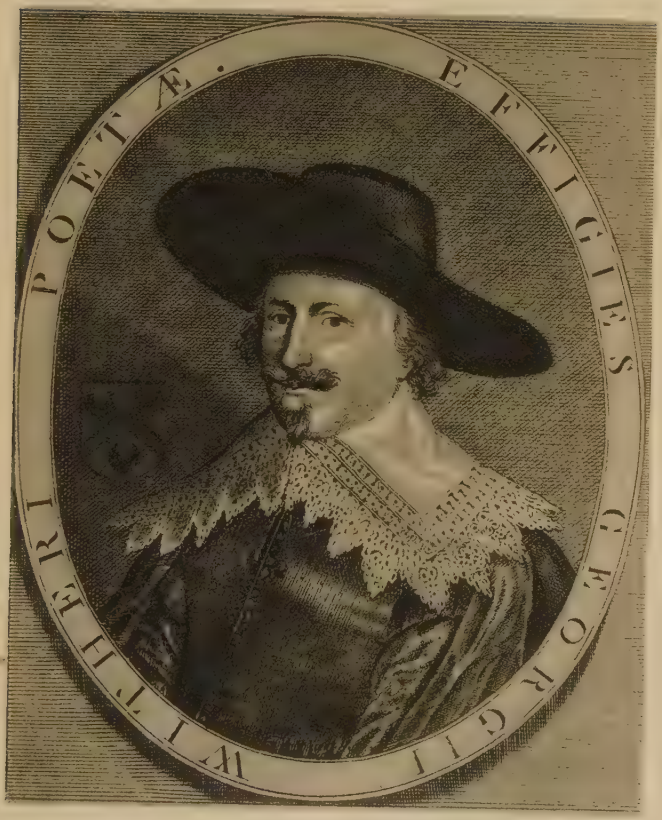
evenings through. Like his, the wit of J. W. was deep, recondite, imaginative, full of goodly figures and fancies. Those evenings have long since passed away, and nothing comparable to them has come in their stead, or can come. "We have heard the chimes at midnight."

"NUGÆ CANORÆ"—POEMS BY CHARLES LLOYD

The reader who shall take up these poems in the mere expectation of deriving amusement for an idle hour, will have been grievously misled by the title. *Nugæ* they certainly are not, but full of weight; earnest, passionate communings of the spirit with itself. He that reads them must come to them in a serious mood; he should be one that has descended into his own bosom; that has probed his own nature even to shivering; that has indulged the deepest yearnings of affection, and has had them strangely flung back upon him; that has built to himself a fortress of conscious weakness; that has cleaved to the rock of his early religion, and through hope in it hath walked upon the uneasy waters.

We should be sorry to convey a false notion. Mr. Lloyd's religion has little of pretence or sanctimoniousness about it; it is worn as an armour of self-defence, not as a weapon of outward annoyance: the believing may be drawn by it, and the unbelieving need not to be deterred. The Religionist of Nature may find some things to venerate in its mild Christianity, when he shall discover in a volume, generally hostile to new experiments in philosophy and morals, some of its tenderest pages dedicated to the virtues of *Mary Wolstonecraft Godwin*.

Mr. Lloyd's poetry has not much in it that is narrative or dramatic. It is richer in natural description; but the *imagery* is for the most part embodied with, and made subservient to, the *sentiment*, as in many of the sonnets, etc. His genius is metaphysical and profound; his verses are made up of deep feeling, accompanied with the perpetual running commentary of his own deeper self-reflection. His affections seem to run kindliest in domestic channels; and there are some strains commemorative of a dead relative, which, while they do honour to the heart of the writer, are of too sacred a nature, we think, almost to have been committed to print at all; much less would they bear exposal among the miscellaneous matter indispensable to a public journal. We prefer therefore giving an extract



GEORGE WITHER

From the portrait by John Payne in the "Emblemes," 1634.

See p. 287

from the fine blank verse poem, entitled *Christmas*. It is richly imbued with the meditative, introspective cast of mind so peculiar to this author:

——————There is a time
When first sensation paints the burning cheek,
Fills the moist eye, and quickens the keen pulse,
That mystic meanings half-conceived invest
The simplest forms, and all doth speak, all lives
To the eager heart! at such a time to me
Thou camest, dear HOLIDAY! thy twilight glooms
Mysterious thoughts awakened, and I mused
As if possess'd, yea felt I as I had known
The dawn of inspiration. Then the days
Were sanctified by feeling; all around
Of an indwelling presence darkly spake.
Silence had borrow'd sounds to cheat the soul!
And, to the toys of life, the teeming brain,
Impregning them with its own character,
Gave preternatural import; the dull face
Was eloquent, and even the idle air
Most potent shapes, varying and yet the same,
Substantially express'd.

——————But soon my heart,
Unsatisfied with blissful shadows, felt
Achings of vacancy, and owned the throb
Of undefined desire, while lays of love
Firstling and wild stole to my tremulous tongue.
To me thy rites were mockery then, thy glee
Of little worth. More pleased I trod the waste
Sear'd with the sleety wind, and drank its blast;
Deeming thy dreary shapes most strangely sweet,
Mist-shrouded winter! in mute loneliness
I wore away the day which others hailed
So cheerily, still usher'd in with chaunt
Of carol, and the merry ringers' peal,
Most musical to the good man that wakes
And praises God in gladness.

——————But soon fled
The dreams of Love fantastic! still the Friend,
The Friend, the wild roam o'er the drifted snows,
Remain unsung! then when the wintry view
Objectless, mist-hidden, or in uncouth forms
Prank'd by the arrowy flake, might aptly yield
New stores to shaping fantasy, I roved
With him, my loved companion! Oh, 'twas sweet,
Ye who have known the swell that heaves the breast
Pregnant with loftiest poetry, declare—
Is aught more soothing to the charmed soul
Than friendship's glow, the independent dream
Gathering, when all the frivolous shows are fled
Of artificial life; when the wild step
Boundeth on wide existence, unbeheld,
Uncheck'd, and the heart fashioneth its hope
In Nature's school, while Nature bursts around,
Nor man her spoiler meddles in the scene!

Farewell, dear day, much hath it sooth'd my heart,
To chaunt thy frail memorial.

————Now advance
The darkening years, and I do sojourn, home!
From thee afar. Where the broad-bosom'd hills,
Swept by perpetual clouds, of Scotland, rise,
Me fate compels to tarry. Ditty quaint,
Or custom'd carol, there my vacant ear
Ne'er blest. I thought of home and happier days!
And, as I thought, my vexed spirit blamed
That austere race, who, mindless of the glee
Of good old festival, coldly forbade
The observance which of mortal life relieves
The languid sameness; seeming too to bring
Sanction from hoar antiquity, and years
Long past!

FIRST FRUITS OF AUSTRALIAN POETRY

Sydney, New South Wales. Printed for Private Distribution.

BY BARRON FIELD

I first adventure; follow me who list;
And be the second Austral Harmonist.

WHOEVER thou art that hast transplanted the British wood-notes to the far-off forests which the Kangaroo haunts—whether thou art some involuntary exile that solaces his sad estrangement with recurrence to his native notes, with more wisdom than those captive Hebrews of old refused to sing their Sion songs in a strange land—or whether, as we rather suspect, thou art that valued friend of ours, who, in thy young time of life, together with thy faithful bride, thy newly "wedded flower," didst, in obedience to the stern voice of duty, quit thy friends, thy family, thy pleasing avocations, the Muses with which thou wert as deeply smitten as any, we believe, in our age and country, to go and administer tedious justice in inauspicious unliterary THIEFLAND,[1]—we reclaim thee for our own, and gladly would transport thee back to thy native "fields," and studies congenial to thy habits.

We know a merry Captain, and co-navigator with Cook, who prides himself upon having planted the first pun in Otaheite. It was in their own language, and the islanders first looked at

[1] An elegant periphrasis for *the Bay*. Mr. Coleridge led us the way—"CLOUDLAND, gorgeous land."

him, then stared at one another, and all at once burst out into a genial laugh. It was a stranger, and as a stranger they gave it welcome. Many a quibble of their own growth, we doubt not, has since sprung from that well-timed exotic. Where puns flourish, there must be no inconsiderable advance in civilisation. The same good results we are willing to augur from this dawn of refinement at Sydney. They were beginning to have something like a theatrical establishment there, which we are sorry to hear has been suppressed; for we are of opinion with those who think that a taste for such kind of entertainments is one remove at least from profligacy, and that Shakspeare and Gay may be as safe teachers of morality as the ordinary treatises which assume to instil that science. We have seen one of their play bills (while the thing was permitted to last) and were affected by it in no ordinary degree; particularly in the omission of the titles of honour, which in this country are condescendingly conceded to the players. In their Dramatis Personæ, *Jobson* was played by Smith; *Lady Loverule*, Jones; *Nell*, Wilkinson; Gentlemen and Lady Performers alike curtailed of their fair proportions. With a little patronage, we prophecy, that in a very few years the histrionic establishment of Sydney would have risen in respectability; and the humble performers would, by tacit leave, or open permission, have been allowed to use the same encouraging affixes to their names, which dignify their prouder brethren and sisters in the mother country. What a moral advancement, what a lift in the scale, to a Braham or a Stephens of New South Wales, to write themselves *Mr.* and *Miss!* The King here has it not in his power to do so much for a Commoner, no, not though he dub him a Duke.

The "First Fruits" consist of two poems. The first celebrates the plant *epacris grandiflora*; but we are no botanists, and perhaps there is too much matter mixed up in it from the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, to please some readers. The thefts are indeed so open and palpable, that we almost recur to our first surmise, that the author must be some unfortunate wight, sent on his travels for plagiarisms of a more serious complexion. But the old matter and the new blend kindly together; and must, we hope, have proved right acceptable to more than one

> ————Among the Fair
> Of that young land of Shakspeare's tongue.

We select for our readers the second poem; and are mistaken,

if it does not relish of the graceful hyperboles of our elder writers.

THE KANGAROO

———"mixtumque genus, prolesque biformis."—VIRG., *Æn.* vi.

Kangaroo, kangaroo!
Thou spirit of Australia,
That redeems from utter failure,
From perfect desolation,
And warrants the creation
Of this fifth part of the earth.
Which should seem an after-birth,
Not conceiv'd in the beginning
(For God bless'd his work at first,
And saw that it was good),
But emerg'd at the first sinning,
When the ground was therefore curst;—
And hence this barren wood!

Kangaroo, kangaroo,
Tho' at first sight we should say,
In thy nature that there may
Contradiction be involv'd,
Yet, like discord well resolv'd,
It is quickly harmonis'd.
Sphynx or mermaid realis'd,
Or centaur unfabulous,
Would scarce be more prodigious,
Or labyrinthine minotaur,
With which great Theseus did war,
Or Pegasus poetical,
Or hippogriff—chimeras all!
But, what Nature would compile,
Nature knows to reconcile;
And Wisdom, ever at her side,
Of all her children 's justified.

She had made the squirrel fragile;
She had made the bounding hart;
But a third so strong and agile
Was beyond ev'n Nature's art.
So she join'd the former two
In thee, Kangaroo!
To describe thee, it is hard:
Converse of the camelopard,
Which beginneth camel-wise,
But endeth of the panther size,
Thy fore half, it would appear,
Had belong'd to "some small deer,"
Such as liveth in a tree;
By thy hinder, thou should'st be
A large animal of chase,
Bounding o'er the forest's space;—
Join'd by some divine mistake,
None but Nature's hand can make—
Nature, in her wisdom's play,
On Creation's holiday.
For howsoe'er anomalous,

Thou yet art not incongruous,
Repugnant or preposterous.
Better-proportion'd animal,
More graceful or ethereal,
Was never follow'd by the hound,
With fifty steps to thy one bound.
Thou canst not be amended: no,
Be as thou art; thou best art so.

When sooty swans are once more rare,
And duck-moles [1] the museum's care,
Be still the glory of this land,
Happiest work of finest hand!

We can conceive it to have been written by Andrew Marvel, supposing him to have been banished to Botany Bay, as he did, we believe, once meditate a voluntary exile to Bermuda. See his fine poem, "Where the remote Bermudas ride."

LAMIA, ISABELLA, THE EVE OF SAINT AGNES, AND OTHER POEMS

By John Keats, Author of *Endymion*

A Casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imageries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded 'scutcheon blush'd with blood of Queens and Kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for Heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest;
And on her silver cross soft amethyst;
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for Heaven——

Her vespers done,
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;
Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant boddice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees;
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair Saint Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

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[1] The *cygnus niger* of Juvenal is no *rara avis* in Australia; and time has here given ample proof of the *ornithorhynchus paradoxus*.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep opprest
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown like a thought until the morrow day;
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain;
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

Such is the description which Mr. Keats has given us, with a delicacy worthy of Christabel, of a high-born damsel, in one of the apartments of a baronial castle, laying herself down devoutly to dream, on the charmed Eve of St. Agnes; and like the radiance, which comes from those old windows upon the limbs and garments of the damsel, is the almost Chaucer-like painting, with which this poet illumes every subject he touches. We have scarcely anything like it in modern description. It brings us back to ancient days, and

Beauty making-beautiful old rhymes.

The finest thing in the volume is the paraphrase of Boccaccio's story of the Pot of Basil. Two Florentines, merchants, discovering that their sister Isabella has placed her affections upon Lorenzo, a young factor in their employ, when they had hopes of procuring for her a noble match, decoy Lorenzo, under pretence of a ride, into a wood, where they suddenly stab and bury him. The anticipation of the assassination is wonderfully conceived in one epithet, in the narration of the ride—

So the two brothers, and their *murder'd* man,
Rode past fair Florence, to where Arno's stream
Gurgles—

Returning to their sister, they delude her with a story of their having sent Lorenzo abroad to look after their merchandises; but the spirit of her lover appears to Isabella in a dream, and discovers how and where he was stabbed, and the spot where they have buried him. To ascertain the truth of the vision, she sets out to the place, accompanied by her old nurse, ignorant as yet of her wild purpose. Her arrival at it, and digging for the body, is described in the following stanzas, than which there is nothing more awfully simple in diction, more nakedly grand and moving in sentiment, in Dante, in Chaucer, or in Spenser:

She gaz'd into the fresh-thrown mould as though
One glance did fully all its secrets tell;
Clearly she saw, as other eyes would know
Pale limbs at bottom of a crystal well;

Upon the murd'rous spot she seem'd to grow,
  Like to a native lily of the dell:
Then with her knife, all sudden, she began
To dig more fervently than misers can.

Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove whereon
  Her silk had play'd in purple phantasies;
She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than stone,
  And put it in her bosom, where it dries
And freezes utterly unto the bone
  Those dainties made to still an infant's cries;
Then 'gan she work again; nor stay'd her care,
But to throw back at times her veiling hair.

That old nurse stood beside her wondering,
  Until her heart felt pity to the core
At sight of such a dismal labouring,
  And so she kneeled, with her locks all hoar,
And put her lean hand to the horrid thing:
  Three hours they labour'd at this travail sore;
At last they felt the kernel of the grave,
And Isabella did not stamp and rave.

To pursue the story in prose.—They find the body, and with their joint strengths sever from it the head, which Isabella takes home, and wrapping it in a silken scarf, entombs it in a garden-pot, covers it with mould, and over it she plants sweet basil, which, watered with her tears, thrives so that no other basil tufts in all Florence throve like her basil. How her brothers, suspecting something mysterious in this herb, which she watched day and night, at length discover the head, and secretly convey the basil from her; and how from the day that she loses her basil she pines away, and at last dies, we must refer our readers to the poem, or to the divine germ of it in Boccaccio. It is a great while ago since we read the original; and in this affecting revival of it we do but

Weep again a long-forgotten woe.

More exuberantly rich in imagery and painting is the story of the Lamia. It is of as gorgeous stuff as ever romance was composed of. Her first appearance in serpentine form—

—a beauteous wreath with melancholy eyes—

her dialogue with Hermes, the *Star of Lethe*, as he is called by one of those prodigal phrases which Mr. Keats abounds in, which are each a poem in a word, and which in this instance lays open to us at once, like a picture, all the dim regions and their inhabitants, and the sudden coming of a celestial among them; the charming of her into woman's shape again by the God; her marriage with the beautiful Lycius; her magic palace, which

those who knew the street, and remembered it complete from childhood, never remembered to have seen before; the few Persian mutes, her attendants,

> ——who that same year
> Were seen about the markets: none knew where
> They could inhabit;—

the high-wrought splendours of the nuptial bower, with the fading of the whole pageantry, Lamia, and all, away, before the glance of Apollonius,—are all that fairy-land can do for us. They are for younger impressibilities. To *us* an ounce of feeling is worth a pound of fancy; and therefore we recur again, with a warmer gratitude, to the story of Isabella and the pot of basil, and those never-cloying stanzas which we have cited, and which we think should disarm criticism, if it be not in its nature cruel; if it would not deny to honey its sweetness, nor to roses redness, nor light to the stars in Heaven; if it would not bay the moon out of the skies, rather than acknowledge she is fair.

"MARCIAN COLONNA," WITH OTHER POEMS

BY BARRY CORNWALL

The Poems of this writer have already obtained that popularity which can be obtained only by the genuine spirit of poetry properly applied. He has chosen in general amatory subjects, and his reader will find, in the course of this work, what in the law phrase would be called, all the cases. This variety he has treated in the style of the old writers with a close adherence to their tenderness and simplicity, and yet perhaps a deeper deference for the peculiarities of their romance than may be necessary in an age so remote as ours from the peculiarities of their life. But, in his principal subject, no man can widely err who follows nature; and we think this picturing of those feelings that all men have felt at one time or other, greatly superior in fidelity to that of some of our most celebrated writers on passion. Moore is such an amatory poet as might have been inspired by his own *Anacreon*. Lively, various, light, witty; he talks of love like one who has learned its language in a ballroom, laughed at it in a *conversazione*, and toasted it afterwards at a Bond-street Tavern. He overwhelms the subject with all the commentaries that have flowed upon it from

the courtly and the conversational for the last fifteen hundred years, and dignifies a smile with a metaphor from BOETHIUS, or a pun from NAZIANZEN; his allusions are as remote as his figures, and the lover is sustained by the recollection of a fountain of *Jupiter Ammon*, or a coin of MITHRIDATES. But he is graceful, accomplished, and eloquent. His early strayings are to be remembered only by himself, and Literature has to thank him for a large contribution to her treasures. Lord BYRON'S love is not love: it is animal passion, distorted by mental violence. He suffers no lapse of the storm; his heaven has no blue; he fixes his palace of the passions in the land of the earthquake; they all dwell together, are all roused by the same shock, struggle together in the same ferocity, frenzy, and despair, and perish in the same resistless ruin. He has great power in picturing those convulsions; but he has little knowledge of the heart, and no knowledge of love. His poetry may live, because repelling as its atrocity is, his picture of atrocity is true. There is enough of intemperance, vice, and madness in the world to make his picture strike upon the feelings. His poetry is more than the picture, it is the mirror; his fault is, that the mirror is held up only to vice, and held less to shock it than to soothe—less to glare on it in its own deformity, than to show that in its dark and troubled features there may still be beauty sufficient to more than reconcile the spirit to guilt. His hero is a demon; but the demon is perpetually reminded that he still wears the vestiges of the angel.

The writer before us has adopted a milder view, and therefore we think a more natural; he has not solicited popularity by making ferocious passion popular, and therefore we give him the praise of meritorious and rational conceptions of his duty to society. This we think higher praise, and likely to be more gratifying to a man of the feelings, without which genius is a bauble, than the usual routine of panegyric on his poetic powers. We believe that those laborious and customary tributes would be as irksome to him as they are to every man of understanding; and we shall leave his Poems to make the impression on others which they have made upon us, and of whose force and generality we could have no doubt in any age capable of feeling the spirit of poetry. The story of Marcian Colonna we can now scarcely more than sketch. Marcian, a man of noble family, had been educated for the Romish Church, some visions of thwarted love embittered his solitude, and he grew half frantic. The husband of his fair one is lost at sea. Marcian had already

become the heir of his house by the death of an elder brother. He marries her, his melancholy overwhelms him again, he leads a wandering life; Julia discovers that her former husband had escaped from his shipwreck. The recollection of what she now feels to be guilt overwhelms her, she loses her spirits and Marcian shortens her pain by poison. We must limit ourselves to a few extracts. The first is an Address to the ocean:

> Oh! thou vast Ocean!—ever sounding sea!
> Thou symbol of a drear immensity!
> Thou thing that windest round the solid world
> Like a huge animal, which downward hurled
> From the black clouds, lies weltering and alone,
> Lashing and writhing till its strength be gone.
> Thy voice is like the thunder, and thy sleep
> Is as a giant's slumber, loud and deep.
> Thou speakest in the East and in the West
> At once, and on thy heavily laden breast
> Fleets come and go, and shapes that have no life
> Or motion yet are moved and meet in strife.
> The earth hath nought of this: no chance nor change
> Ruffles its surface, and no spirit dare
> Give answer to the tempest-waken'd air;
> But o'er its waste the weakly tenants range
> At will, and wound its bosom as they go:
> Ever the same, it hath no ebb, no flow;
> But in their stated round the seasons come,
> And pass, like visions, to their viewless home,
> And come again, and vanish: the young Spring
> Looks ever bright with leaves and blossoming,
> And Winter always winds his sullen horn,
> When the wild Autumn, with a look forlorn,
> Dies in his stormy manhood; and the skies
> Weep and flowers sicken when the Summer flies.
> Thou only, terrible Ocean, hast a power,
> A will, a voice, and in thy wrathful hour,
> When thou dost lift thine anger to the clouds,
> A fearful and magnificent beauty shrouds
> Thy broad green forehead. If thy waves be driven
> Backwards and forwards by the shifting wind,
> How quickly dost thou thy great strength unbind,
> And stretch thine arms, and war at once with Heaven,
> Thou trackless and immeasurable main!
> On thee no record ever lived again
> To meet the hand that writ it: line nor lead
> Hath ever fathom'd thy profoundest deeps,
> Where haply the huge monster swells and sleeps,
> King of his watery limit, who 'tis said
> Can move the mighty Ocean into storm—
> Oh! wonderful thou art, great element:
> And lovely in repose: thy summer form
> Is beautiful, and when thy silver waves
> Make music in earth's dark and winding caves,
> I love to wander on thy pebbled beach,
> Marking the sunlight at the evening hour,
> And hearken to the sounds thy waters teach,
> "Eternity, Eternity, and Power."

A BEAUTY AND A FESTIVAL

On that same night of mirth Vitelli came,
With his fair child, sole heiress of his name,
She came amid the lovely and the proud,
Peerless; and when she moved, the gallant crowd
Divided, as the obsequious vapours light
Divide to let the Queen Moon pass by night:
Then looks of love were seen, and many a sigh
Was wasted on the air, and some aloud
Talked of the pangs they felt, and swore to die
She, like the solitary rose that springs
In the first warmth of summer days, and flings
A perfume the more sweet because alone—
Just bursting into beauty, with a zone
Half girl's, half woman's, smiled and then forgot
Those gentle things to which she answered not.
But when Colonna's heir bespoke her hand,
And led her to the dance, she questioned why
His brother joined not in that revelry;
Careless he turned aside, and did command
Loudly the many instruments to sound,
And well did that young couple tread the ground;
Each step was lost in each accordant note,
Which through the palace seem'd that night to float,
As merrily as though the Satyr-god,
With his inspiring reed, (the mighty Pan)
Had left his old Arcadian woods, and trod
Piping upon the shores Italian.

MADNESS

It was no dream, for often since that hour
The star has flashed, and I have felt its power;
('Twas in my moodier moments) and my soul
Seem'd languishing for blood, and there did roll
Rivers of blood beside me, and my hands,
As tho' I had obeyed my fates' commands,
Were smeared and sanguine, and my throbbing brow
Grew hot and blister'd with the fire within,
And my heart withered with a secret sin,
And my whole heart was tempested; it grew
Larger methought with passion—even now
I feel it swell within me, and a flood
Of fiery wishes, such as man ne'er knew,
Seem to consume me. Sometimes I have stood
Looking at Heaven—for hope, with these sad eyes,
In vain—for I was born a sacrifice.
What hope was there for me, a murderer?
What lovely? nothing—yes, I err, I err.
Yes, mixed with these wild visionings a form
Descended, fragile as a summer cloud,
And with her gentle voice she stilled the storm:
I never saw her face, and yet I bowed
Down to the dust, as savage men, they say,
Adore the sun in countries far away.

I felt the music of her words like balm
Raining upon my soul, and I grew calm
As the great forest lion that lay down
At Una's feet, without a single moan,
Vanquish'd by love, or as the herds that hung
Their heads in silence when the Thracian sung.

SIR THOMAS MORE

Of the writings of this distinguished character little is remembered at present beyond his *Eutopia*, and some Epigrams. But there is extant a massive folio of his Theological Works in English, partly Practical Divinity, but for the greater part Polemic, against the grand Lutheran Heresy, just then beginning to flower. From these I many years ago made some extracts, rejecting only the antiquated orthography, (they being intended only for my own amusement) except in some instances of proper names, etc. I send them you as I find them, thinking that some of your readers may consider them as curious. The first is from a Tract against Tyndale, called the *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*.[1] The author of *Religio Medici* somewhere says, "his conscience would give him the lye, if she should say that he absolutely detested or hated any essence *but the Devil*." Whether Browne was not out in his metaphysics, when he supposed himself capable of hating, that is, *entertaining a personal aversion to*, a being so abstracted, or such a Concrete of all irreconcileable abstractions rather, as usually passes for the meaning of that name, I contend not; but that the same hatred in kind, which he professed against our great spiritual enemy, was in downright earnest cultivated and defended by More against that portentous phenomenon in those times, a *Heretic*, from his speeches against Luther and Tyndale cannot for a moment be doubted. His account of poor Hytton which follows (a reformado priest of the day) is penned with a wit and malice hyper-satanic. It is infinitely diverting in the midst of its diabolism, if it be not rather, what Coleridge calls,

Too wicked for a smile, too foolish for a tear.

——"now to the intent that ye may somewhat see what good Christian faith Sir Thomas Hytton was of, this new saint of Tindale's canonization, in whose burning Tindale so gaily

[1] To some foregone Tract of More's, of which I have lost the title.

glorieth, and which hath his holiday so now appointed to him, that St. Polycarpus must give him place in the Calendar, I shall somewhat show you what wholesome heresies this holy martyr held. First ye shall understand, that he was a priest, and falling to Luther's sect, and after that to the sect of Friar Huskin and Zwinglius, cast off matins and mass, and all divine service, and so became an apostle, sent to and fro, between our English heretics beyond the sea, and such as were here at home. Now happed it so, that after he had visited here his holy congregations in divers corners and luskes lanes, and comforted them in the Lord to stand stiff with the devil in their errors and heresies, as he was going back again at Gravesend, *God considering the great labour that he had taken already, and determining to bring his business to his well-deserved end, gave him suddenly such a favour and so great a grace in the visage, that every man that beheld him took him for a thief.* For whereas there had been certain linen clothes pilfered away that were hanging on an hedge, and Sir Thomas Hitton was walking not far off *suspiciously in the meditation of his heresies*: the people doubting that the beggarly knave had stolen the clouts, fell in question with him and searched him, and so found they certain letters secretly conveyed in his coat, written from evangelical brethren here unto the evangelical heretics beyond the sea. And upon those letters founden, he was with his letters brought before the most Rev. Father in God the Archbishop of Canterbury, and afterward as well by his Lordship as by the Rev. Father the Bishop of Rochester examined, and after for his abominable heresies delivered to the secular hands and burned."

What follows (from the same Tract) is *mildened* a little by the introduction of the name of Erasmus, More's intimate friend; though by the sting in the rear of it, it is easy to see, that it was to a little temporising only, and to some thin politic partitions from these Reformers, that Erasmus owed his exemption from the bitter anathemas More had in store for them. The *love* almost makes the *hate* more shocking by the contrast!

——"Then he (Tyndale) asketh me why I have not contended with Erasmus, whom he calleth my darling, of all this long while, for translating of this word *ecclesia* into this word *congregatio*. And then he cometh forth with his feat proper taunt, that I favour him of likelihood for making of his Book of Moria in my house. There had he hit me, lo! save for lack of a little

salt. I have not contended with Erasmus my darling, because I found no such malicious intent with Erasmus my darling, as I find with Tyndale. For had I found with Erasmus my darling the shrewd intent and purpose, that I find in Tyndale, Erasmus my darling should be no more my darling. But I find in Erasmus my darling, that he detesteth and abhorreth the errors and heresies, that Tyndale plainly teacheth and abideth by, and therefore Erasmus my darling shall be my dear darling still. And surely if Tyndale had either never taught them, or yet had the grace to revoke them, then should Tyndale be my dear darling too. But while he holdeth such heresies still, I cannot take for my darling him that the devil taketh for his darling."

The next extract is from a "Dialogue concerning Heresies," and has always struck me as a master-piece of eloquent logic, and something in the manner of Burke, when he is stripping a sophism *sophistically*; as he treats Paine, and others *passim*.

——"And not to be of the foolish mind that Luther is, which wished in a sermon of his, that he had in his hand all the pieces of the holy cross, and saith that, if he so had, he would throw them there as never sun should shine on them. And for what worshipful reason would the wretch do such villainy to the cross of Christ? because, as he saith, that there is so much gold now bestowed about the garnishing of the pieces of the cross, that there is none left for poor folk. Is not this an high reason? as though all the gold, that is now bestowed about the pieces of the holy cross, would not have failed to have been given to poor men, if they had not been bestowed about the garnishing of the cross. And as though there were nothing lost, but that is bestowed about Christ's cross. Take all the gold, that is spent about all the pieces of Christ's cross through Christendom (albeit many a good Christen prince, and other goodly people, hath honourably garnished many pieces thereof), yet, if all the gold were gathered together, it would appear a poor portion in comparison of the gold that is bestowed upon cups. What speak we of cups? in which the gold, albeit that it be not given to poor men, yet is it saved, and may be given in alms when men will, *which they never will*; how small a portion, ween we, were the gold about all the pieces of Christ's cross, if it were compared with the gold that is *quite cast away* about the gilting of knives, swords, spurs, arras, and painted clothes: and (as

though these things could not consume gold fast enough) the gilting of posts, and whole roofs, not only in palaces of princes and great prelates, but also many right mean men's houses. And yet, among all these things, could Luther spy no gold that *grievously glittered in his bleared eyes*, but only about the cross of Christ.—For that gold, if it were thence, the wise men weeneth, it would be strait given to poor men, and that where he daily see'th, that such as have their purse full of gold, give to the poor not one piece thereof; but, if they give ought, they ransack the bottom among all the gold, to seek out here an halfpenny, or *in his country* a brass penny whereof four make a farthing: *such goodly causes find they, that pretend holiness for the colour of their cloaked heresies*."

I subjoin from the same "Dialogue" More's cunning defence of Miracles done at Saints' shrines, on Pilgrimages, etc. all which he defends, as he was bound by holy church to do, most stoutly. The *manner* of it is arch and surprising, and the narration infinitely naive; the *matter* is the old fallacy of confounding miracles (things happening out of nature) with natural things the grounds of which we cannot explain. In this sense every thing is a miracle, and nothing is.

——"And first if men should tell you, that they saw before an image of the crucifix a dead man raised to life, ye would much marvel thereof, and so might ye well; yet could I tell you somewhat that I have seen myself, that methinketh as great marvel, but I have no lust to tell you, because that ye be so circumspect and ware in belief of any miracles, that ye would not believe it for me, but mistrust me for it.

"Nay, Sir, (quod he,) in good faith, if a thing seemed to me never so unlikely, yet if ye would earnestly say that yourself have seen it, I neither would nor could mistrust it.

"Well (quod I) then ye make me the bolder to tell ye. And yet will I tell you nothing, but that I would, if need were, find you good witness to prove it.

"It shall not need, Sir, (quod he,) but I beseech you let me hear it.

"Forsooth (quod I) because we speak of a man raised from death to life. There was in the parish of St. Stephen's in Walbrook, in London, where I dwelled before I come to Chelsith, a man and a woman, which are yet quick and quething, and young were they both. The eldest I am sure passed not twenty-

four. It happed them, as doth among folk, the one to cast the mind to the other. And after many lets, for the maiden's mother was much against it, at last they came together, and were married in St. Stephen's church, which is not greatly famous for many miracles, but yet yearly on St. Stephen's day it is somewhat sought unto and visited with folk's devotion. But now short tale to make, this young woman (as manner is in brides ye wot well) was at night brought to bed with honest women. And then after that went the bridegroom to bed, and every body went their ways, and left them twain there alone. And the same night, yet abide let me not lie, now on faith to say the truth I am not very sure of the time, but surely as it appeared afterward, it was of likelihood the same night, or some other time soon after, except it happened a little before.

"No force for the time (quod he).

"Truth (quod I) and as for the matter, all the parish will testify for truth, the woman was known for so honest. But for the conclusion, the seed of them twain turned in the woman's body, first into blood, and after into shape of manchild. And then waxed quick, and she great therewith. And was within the year delivered of a fair boy, and forsooth it was not then (for I saw it myself) passing the length of a foot. And I am sure he is grown now an inch longer than I.

"How long is it ago? (quod he).

"By my faith (quod I) about twenty-one years.

"Tush! (quod he,) this is a worthy miracle!

"In good faith, (quod I) never wist I that any man could tell that he had any other beginning. And methinketh that this is as great a miracle as the raising of a dead man."

Diabolical Possession was a rag of the old abomination, which this Contunder of Heresies thought himself obliged no less to wrap tightly about the loins of his faith, than any of the *splendidiores panni* of the old red Harlot. But (read with allowance for the belief of the times) the narrative will be found affecting, particularly in what relates to the parents of the damsel, "rich and sore abashed."

——"Amongst which (*true miracles*) I durst boldly tell you for one, the wonderful work of God, that was within these few years wrought, in the house of a right worshipful knight, Sir Roger Wentworth, upon divers of his children, and especially one of his daughters, a very fair young gentlewoman of twelve years of age, in marvellous manner vexed and tormented by our

BARRY CORNWALL

See p. 307

ghostly enemy the devil, her mind alienated and raving with despising and blasphemy of God, and hatred of all hallowed things, with knowledge and perceiving of the hallowed from the unhallowed, all were she nothing warned thereof. And after that moved in her own mind, and monished by the will of God, to go to our Lady of Ippiswitche. In the way of which pilgrimage, she prophesied and told many things done and said at the same time in other places, which were proved true, and many things said, lying in her trance, of such wisdom and learning, that right cunning men highly marvelled to hear of so young an unlearned maiden, when herself wist not what she said, such things uttered and spoken, as well learned men might have missed with a long study, and finally being brought and laid before the Image of our Blessed Lady, was there in the sight of many worshipful people so grievously tormented, and in face, eyen, look, and countenance, so griesly changed, and her mouth drawn aside, and her eyen laid out upon her cheeks, that it was a terrible sight to behold. And after many marvellous things at the same time shewed upon divers persons by the devil upon God's sufferance, as well all the remnant as the maiden herself, in the presence of all the company, restored to their good state perfectly cured and suddenly. And in this matter no pretext of begging, no suspicion of feigning, no possibility of counterfeiting, no simpleness in the seers, her father and mother right honourable and rich, *sore abashed to see such chances in their children*, the witnesses great number, and many of great worship, wisdom, and good experience, the maid herself too young to feign, and the end of the matter virtuous, the virgin so moved in her mind with the miracle, that she forthwith for aught her father could do, forsook the world, and profest religion in a very good and godly company at the Mynoresse, where she hath lived well and gracious ever since."

I shall trouble you with one Excerpt more, from a "Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation"; because the style of it is solemn and weighty; and because it was written by More in his last imprisonment in the Tower, preparatory to his sentence. After witnessing his treatment of Sir John Hytton, and his brethren, we shall be inclined to mitigate some of our remorse, that More should have suffered death himself *for conscience sake*. The reader will not do this passage justice, if he do not read it as part of a sermon; and as putting himself into the feelings of an auditory of More's Creed and Times.

——"But some men now when this calling of God [any tribulation] causeth them to be sad, they be loth to leave their sinful lusts that hang in their hearts, and specially if they have any such kind of living, as they must needs leave off, or fall deeper in sin: or if they have done so many great wrongs, that they have many 'mends to make, that must (if they follow God) 'minish much their money, then are these folks (alas) woefully bewrapped, for God pricketh upon them of his great goodness still, and the grief of this great pang pincheth them at the heart, and of wickedness they wry away, and fro this tribulation they turn to their flesh for help, and labour to shake off this thought, and then they mend their pillow, and lay their head softer, and assay to sleep; and when that will not be, then they find a talk awhile with them that lie by them. If that cannot be neither, then they lie and long for day, and then get them forth about their worldly wretchedness, the matter of their prosperity, the self-same sinful things with which they displease God most, and at length with many times using this manner, God utterly casteth them off. And then they set nought neither by God nor devil. * * * But alas! when death cometh, then cometh again their sorrow, then will no soft bed serve, nor no company make him merry, then must he leave his outward worship and comfort of his glory, and lie panting in his bed as if he were on a pine-bank, then cometh his fear of his evil life and his dreadful death. Then cometh the torment, his cumbered conscience and fear of his heavy judgment. Then the devil draweth him to despair with imagination of hell, and suffereth him not then to take it for a fable. And yet if he do, then findeth it the wretch no fable. * * * Some have I seen even in their last sickness set up in their death-bed underpropped with pillows, take their play-fellows to them, and comfort themself with cards, and this they said did ease them well to put fantasies out of their heads; and what fantasies trow you? such as I told you right now of, their own lewd life and peril of their soul, of heaven and of hell that irked them to think of, and therefore cast it out with cards' play as long as ever they might, till the pure pangs of death pulled their heart fro their play, and put them in the case they could not reckon their game. And then left them their gameners, and slily slunk away, and long was it not ere they galped up the ghost. And what game they came then to, that God knoweth and not I. I pray God it were good, but I fear it very sore."

RITSON *VERSUS* JOHN SCOTT THE QUAKER

Critics I read on other men,
And Hypers upon them again.—*Prior.*

I HAVE in my possession Scott's "Critical Essays on some of the Poems of several English Poets,"—a handsome octavo, bought at the sale of Ritson's books; and enriched (or deformed, as some would think it) with MS. annotations in the handwriting of that redoubted Censor. I shall transcribe a few, which seem most characteristic of both the writers — Scott, feeble, but amiable—Ritson, coarse, caustic, clever; and I am to suppose not amiable. But they have proved some amusement to me; and, I hope, will produce some to the reader, this rainy season, which really damps a gentleman's wings for any original flight, and obliges him to ransack his shelves, and miscellaneous reading, to furnish an occasional or make-shift paper. If the sky clears up, and the sun dances this Easter (as they say he is wont to do), the town may be troubled with something more in his own way the ensuing month from its poor servant to command.

ELIA.

DYER'S RUINS OF ROME

——— The pilgrim oft
At dead of night 'mid his oraison hears
Aghast the voice of time disparting towers,
Tumbling all precipitate down-dash'd,
Rattling around, loud thund'ring to the moon;
While murmurs soothe each awful interval
Of ever falling waters.

Scott

There is a very bold transposition in this passage. A superficial reader, not attending to the sense of the epithet *ever*, might be ready to suppose that the *intervals* intended were those between the *falling of the waters*, instead of those between the *falling of the towers*.

Ritson

A beauty, as in Thomson's Winter—

——— Cheerless towns, far distant, never blest,
Save when its annual course the caravan

Bends to the golden coast of rich Cathay,
With news of human kind.[1]

A superficial person—Mr. Scott, for instance, would be apt to connect the last clause in this period with the line foregoing —"bends to the coast of Cathay with news," etc. But has a reader nothing to do but to sit passive, while the connexion is to glide into his ears like oil?

DENHAM'S COOPER'S HILL

The stream is so transparent, pure, and clear,
That, had the self-enamour'd youth gazed here,
So fatally deceived he had not been,
While he the bottom, not his face had seen.

Scott

The last two lines have more music than Denham's can possibly boast.

Ritson

May I have leave to conjecture, that in the very last line of all, the word "the" has erroneously crept in? I am persuaded that the poet wrote "his." To my mind, at least, this reading, in a surprising degree, heightens the idea of the extreme clearness and transparency of the stream, where a man might see *more than his face* (as it were) in it.

COLLINS'S ORIENTAL ECLOGUES

Scott

The second of these little pieces, called Hassan, or the Camel Driver, is of superior character. This poem contradicts history in one principal instance; the merchants of the east travel in numerous caravans, but Hassan is introduced travelling alone in the desart. But this circumstance detracts little from our author's merit; adherence to historical fact is *seldom* required in poetry.

Ritson

It is *always*, where the poet unnecessarily transports you to the ends of the world. If he must plague you with exotic

[1] May I have leave to notice an instance of the same agreeable discontinuity in my friend Lloyd's admirable poem on Christmas?

———Where the broad-bosom'd hills,
Swept with perpetual clouds, of Scotland rise,
Me fate compels to tarry.

scenery, you have a right to exact strict local imagery and costume. Why must I learn Arabic, to read nothing after all but Gay's Fables in another language?

Scott

Abra is introduced in a grove, wreathing a flowery chaplet for her hair. Shakspeare himself could not have devised a more natural and pleasing incident, than that of the monarch's attention being attracted by her song:

> Great Abbas chanced that fated morn to stray,
> By love conducted from the chase away.
> Among the vocal vales he heard her song—

Ritson

Ch—t?

> O stay thee, Agib, for my feet deny,
> No longer friendly to my life, to fly—

Scott

From the pen of Cowley such an observation as Secander's, that "his feet were no longer friendly to his life," might have been expected; but Collins rarely committed such violations of simplicity.

Ritson

Pen of Cowley! impudent goose-quill, how darest thou guess what Cowley would have written?

GRAY'S CHURCHYARD ELEGY

> Save where the beetle wheels—

Scott

The beetle was introduced into poetry by Shakspeare * * *. Shakspeare has made the most of his description; indeed far too much, considering the occasion:

> ———to black Hecate's summons
> The shard-born beetle with his drowsy hum
> Hath rung night's yawning peal.

The imagination must be indeed fertile which could produce this ill-placed exuberance of imagery. The poet, when composing this passage, must have had in his mind all the remote ideas of Hecate, a heathen Goddess, of a beetle, of night, of a

peal of bells, and of that action of the muscles, commonly called a gape or yawn.

Ritson

Numbscull! that would limit an infinite head by the square contents of thy own numbscull.

Scott

The great merit of a poet is not, like Cowley, Donne, and Denham, to say what no man but himself has thought, but what every man besides himself has thought, but no man expressed; or, at least, expressed so well.

Ritson

In other words, all *that* is poetry, which Mr. Scott has thought, as well as the poet; but *that* cannot be poetry, which was not obvious to Mr. Scott, as well as to Cowley, Donne, and Denham.

Scott

Mr. Mason observes of the language in this part, [the Epitaph], that it has a Doric delicacy. It has, indeed, what I should rather term a *happy rusticity*.

Ritson

Come, see
Rural felicity.

GOLDSMITH'S DESERTED VILLAGE

No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
But all the bloomy flush of life is fled—
All but yon widow'd solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forced, in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread.

Scott

Our author's language, in this place, is very defective in correctness. After mentioning the general privation of the "bloomy flush of life," the exceptionary "all but" includes, as a part of that "bloomy flush," an aged decrepit matron; that is to say, in plain prose, "the bloomy flush of life is all fled but one old woman."

Ritson

Yet Milton could write:

Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bell-man's drowsy charm—

and I dare say he was right. O never let a quaker, or a woman try their hand at being witty, any more than a Tom Brown affect to speak by the spirit!

Scott

Aaron Hill, who, although, in general, a bombastic writer, produced some pieces of merit, particularly the Caveat, an allegorical satire on Pope.

Ritson

Say rather his verses on John Dennis, beginning "Adieu, unsocial excellence!" which are implicitly a finer satire on Pope than twenty Caveats. All that Pope could or did say against Dennis, is there condensed; and what he should have said, and did not, for him, is there too.[1]

THOMSON'S SEASONS

Address to the Angler to spare the young fish.

If yet too young, and easily deceived,
A worthless prey scarce bends your pliant rod,
Him, piteous of his youth, and the short space
He has enjoy'd the vital light of heaven,
Soft disengage, and back into the stream
The speckled infant throw.——

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[1] ON THE DEATH OF MR. DENNIS

Adieu, unsocial excellence! at last
Thy foes are vanquish'd, and thy fears are past:
Want, the grim recompense of truth like thine,
Shall now no longer dim thy destined shrine.
The impatient envy, the disdainful air,
The front malignant, and the captious stare,
The furious petulance, the zealous start,
The mist of frailties that obscured thy heart—
Veil'd in thy grave shall unremember'd lie;
For these were parts of Dennis born to die.
But there's a nobler deity behind;
His reason dies not, and has friends to find:
Though here revenge and pride withheld his praise,
No wrongs shall reach him through his future days;
The rising ages shall redeem his name,
And nations read him into lasting fame.
In his defects untaught, his labour'd page
Shall the slow gratitude of Time engage.
Perhaps some story of his pitied woe,
Mix'd in faint shades, may with his memory go,
To touch fraternity with generous shame,
And backward cast an unavailing blame
On times too cold to taste his strength of art,
Yet warm contemners of too weak a heart.
Rest in thy dust, contented with thy lot.
Thy good remember'd, and thy bad forgot.

* * * * *

Scott

The praise bestowed on a preceding passage, cannot be justly given to this. There is in it an attempt at dignity above the occasion. Pathos seems to have been intended, but affectation only is produced.

Ritson

It is not affectation, but it is the mock heroic of pathos, introduced purposely and wisely to attract the reader to a proposal, which from the unimportance of the subject—a yoor little fish—might else have escaped his attention—as children learn, or may learn, humanity to animals from the mock romantic "Perambulations of a Mouse."

HAYMAKING

———Infant hands
Trail the long rake; or, with the fragrant load
O'er-charged, amid the kind oppression roll.

Scott

"Kind oppression" is a phrase of that sort, which one scarcely knows whether to blame or praise: it consists of two words, directly opposite in their signification; and yet, perhaps, no phrase whatever could have better conveyed the idea of an easy uninjurious weight—

Ritson

—and yet he does not know whether to blame or praise it!

SHEEP-SHEARING

——By many a dog
Compell'd——
* * * * *
The clamour much of men, and boys, and dogs—
* * * * *

Scott

The mention of *dogs* twice was superfluous; it might have been easily avoided.——

Ritson

Very true—by mentioning them only once.

Scott

Nature is rich in a variety of minute but striking circumstances; some of which engage the attention of one observer, and some that of another.

Ritson

This lover of truth never uttered a truer speech. Give me a lie with a spirit in it.

Air, earth, and ocean, smile immense.——

Scott

The bombastic "immense smile of air," etc. better omitted.

Ritson

Quite Miltonic—"enormous bliss"—and both, I presume, alike *caviare* to the Quaker.

He comes! he comes! in every breeze the power
Of philosophic melancholy comes!
His near approach, the sudden-starting tear,
The glowing cheek, the mild dejected air,
The soften'd feature, and the beating heart,
Pierced deep with many a virtuous pang, declare.

Scott

This fine picture is greatly injured by a few words. The power should have been said to come "upon the breeze"; not "in every breeze"; an expression which indicates a multiplicity of approaches. If he came "in every breeze," he must have been always coming——

Ritson

—and so he was.

————The branching Oronoque
Rolls a brown deluge, and the native drives
To dwell aloft on life-sufficing trees,
At once his dome, his robe, his food, and arms.
Swell'd by a thousand streams, impetuous hurl'd
From all the roaring Andes, huge descends
The mighty Orellana. *Scarce the muse*
Dares stretch her wing o'er this enormous mass
Of rushing water: *scarce she dares attempt*
The sea-like Plata; to whose dread expanse,
Continuous depth, and wond'rous length of course,
Our floods are rills. With unabated force
In silent dignity they sweep along,
And traverse realms unknown, and blooming wilds,
And fruitful desarts, worlds of solitude,
Where the sun smiles, and seasons teem, in vain,
Unseen and unenjoy'd. Forsaking these,
O'er peopled plains they fair-diffusive flow,
And many a nation feed, and circle safe
In their fair bosom many a happy isle,
The seat of blameless Pan, yet undisturb'd

By Christian crimes, and Europe's cruel sons.
Thus pouring on, they proudly seek the deep,
Whose vanquish'd tide, recoiling from the shock,
Yields to this liquid weight of half the globe,
And Ocean trembles for his green domain.

Scott

Poets not unfrequently aim at aggrandising their subject, by avowing their inability to describe it. This is a puerile and inadequate expedient. Thomson has here, perhaps inadvertently, descended to this feeble art of exaggeration.

Ritson

A magnificent passage, in spite of Duns Scotus! The poet says not a word about his "inability to describe," nor seems to be thinking about his readers at all. He is confessing his own feelings, awe-struck with the contemplation of such o'erwhelming objects; in the same spirit with which he designates the den of the "green serpent" in another place—

—Which ev'n imagination fears to tread—

———

———A dazzling deluge reigns, and all
From pole to pole is undistinguish'd blaze—

Scott

From pole to pole, strictly speaking, is improper. *The poet* meant, "from one part of the horizon to the other."

Ritson

From *his* pole to *thy* pole was a more downward declension than "from the centre thrice," etc.

Ohe! jam satis.

LETTER OF ELIA TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQUIRE

Sir,—You have done me an unfriendly office, without perhaps much considering what you were doing. You have given an ill name to my poor Lucubrations. In a recent Paper on Infidelity, you usher in a conditional commendation of them with an exception; which, preceding the encomium, and taking up nearly the same space with it, must impress your readers with the notion, that the objectionable parts in them are at least equal in quantity to the pardonable. The censure is in

fact the criticism; the praise—a concession merely. Exceptions usually follow, to qualify praise or blame. But there stands your reproof, in the very front of your notice, in ugly characters, like some bugbear, to frighten all good Christians from purchasing. Through you I become an object of suspicion to preceptors of youth, and fathers of families. "*A book which wants only a sounder religious feeling to be as delightful as it is original.*" With no further explanation, what must your readers conjecture, but that my little volume is some vehicle for heresy or infidelity? The quotation which you honour me by subjoining, oddly enough, is of a character which bespeaks a temperament in the writer the very reverse of *that* your reproof goes to insinuate. Had you been taxing me with superstition, the passage would have been pertinent to the censure. Was it worth your while to go so far out of your way to affront the feelings of an old friend, and commit yourself by an irrelevant quotation, for the pleasure of reflecting upon a poor child, an exile at Genoa?

I am at a loss what particular Essay you had in view (if my poor ramblings amount to that appellation) when you were in such a hurry to thrust in your objection, like bad news, foremost.—Perhaps the paper on "Saying Graces" was the obnoxious feature. I have endeavoured there to rescue a voluntary duty—good in place, but never, as I remember, literally commanded—from the charge of an undecent formality. Rightly taken, Sir, that Paper was not against Graces, but Want of Grace; not against the ceremony, but the carelessness and slovenliness so often observed in the performance of it.

Or was it *that* on the "New Year"—in which I have described the feelings of the merely natural man, on a consideration of the amazing change, which is supposable to take place on our removal from this fleshly scene?—If men would honestly confess their misgivings (which few men will) there are times when the strongest Christian of us, I believe, has reeled under questions of such staggering obscurity. I do not accuse you of this weakness. There are some who tremblingly reach out shaking hands to the guidance of Faith—others who stoutly venture into the dark (their Human Confidence their leader, whom they mistake for Faith); and, investing themselves beforehand with Cherubic wings, as they fancy, find their new robes as familiar, and fitting to the supposed growth and stature in godliness, as the coat they left off yesterday—Some whose hope totters upon crutches —Others who stalk into futurity upon stilts.

The contemplation of a Spiritual World,—which, without the addition of a misgiving conscience, is enough to shake some natures to their foundation—is smoothly got over by others, who shall float over the black billows, in their little boat of No-Distrust, as unconcernedly as over a summer sea. The difference is chiefly constitutional.

One man shall love his friends and his friends' faces; and, under the uncertainty of conversing with them again, in the same manner and familiar circumstances of sight, speech, etc., as upon earth—in a moment of no irreverent weakness—for a dream-while—no more—would be almost content, for a reward of a life of virtue (if he could ascribe such acceptance to his lame performances), to take up his portion with those he loved, and was made to love, in this good world, which he knows—which was created so lovely, beyond his deservings. Another, embracing a more exalted vision—so that he might receive indefinite additaments of power, knowledge, beauty, glory, etc.—is ready to forgo the recognition of humbler individualities of earth, and the old familiar faces. The shapings of our heavens are the modifications of our constitutions; and Mr. Feeble Mind, or Mr. Great Heart, is born in every one of us.

Some (and such have been accounted the safest divines) have shrunk from pronouncing upon the final state of any man; nor dare they pronounce the case of Judas to be desperate. Others (with stronger optics), as plainly as with the eye of flesh, shall behold a *given king* in bliss, and a *given chamberlain* in torment; even to the eternising of a cast of the eye in the latter, his own self-mocked and good-humouredly-borne deformity on earth, but supposed to aggravate the uncouth and hideous expression of his pangs in the other place. That one man can presume so far, and that another would with shuddering disclaim such confidences, is, I believe, an effect of the nerves purely.

If in either of these Papers, or elsewhere, I have been betrayed into some levities—not affronting the sanctuary, but glancing perhaps at some of the outskirts and extreme edges, the debateable land between the holy and profane regions—(for the admixture of man's inventions, twisting themselves with the name of religion itself, has artfully made it difficult to touch even the alloy, without, in some men's estimation, soiling the fine gold)—if I have sported within the purlieus of serious matter—it was, I dare say, a humour—be not startled, sir,—which I have unwittingly derived from yourself. You have all your life been making a jest of the Devil. Not of the scriptural

meaning of that dark essence—personal or allegorical; for the nature is no where plainly delivered. I acquit you of intentional irreverence. But indeed you have made wonderfully free with, and been mighty pleasant upon, the popular idea and attributes of him. A noble Lord, your brother Visionary, has scarcely taken greater liberties with the material keys, and merely Catholic notion of St. Peter. You have flattered him in prose: you have chanted him in goodly odes. You have been his Jester; Volunteer Laureat, and self-elected Court Poet to Beelzebub.

You have never ridiculed, I believe, what you thought to be religion, but you are always girding at what some pious, but perhaps mistaken folks, think to be so. For this reason I am sorry to hear that you are engaged upon a life of George Fox. I know you will fall into the error of intermixing some comic stuff with your seriousness. The Quakers tremble at the subject in your hands. The Methodists are as shy of you, upon account of *their* founder. But, above all, our Popish brethren are most in your debt. The errors of that church have proved a fruitful source to your scoffing vein. Their Legend has been a Golden one to you. And here, your friends, Sir, have noticed a notable inconsistency. To the imposing rites, the solemn penances, devout austerities of that communion; the affecting though erring piety of their hermits; the silence and solitude of the Chartreux—their crossings, their holy waters —their Virgin, and their saints—to these, they say, you have been indebted for the best feelings, and the richest imagery, of your epic poetry. You have drawn copious drafts upon Loretto. We thought at one time you were going post to Rome—but that in the facetious commentaries, which it is your custom to append so plentifully, and (some say) injudiciously, to your loftiest performances in this kind, you spurn the uplifted toe, which you but just now seemed to court; leave his holiness in the lurch; and show him a fair pair of Protestant heels under your Romish vestment. When we think you already at the wicket, suddenly a violent cross wind blows you transverse—

> Ten thousand leagues awry.
> Then might we see
> Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost
> And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,
> Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
> The sport of winds.

You pick up pence by showing the hallowed bones, shrine, and crucifix; and you take money a second time by exposing the

trick of them afterwards. You carry your verse to Castle Angelo for sale in a morning; and, swifter than a pedlar can transmute his pack, you are at Canterbury with your prose ware before night.

Sir, is it that I dislike you in this merry vein? The very reverse. No countenance becomes an intelligent jest better than your own. It is your grave aspect, when you look awful upon your poor friends, which I would deprecate.

In more than one place, if I mistake not, you have been pleased to compliment me at the expense of my companions. I cannot accept your compliment at such a price. The upbraiding a man's poverty naturally makes him look about him, to see whether he be so poor indeed as he is presumed to be. You have put me upon counting my riches. Really, Sir, I did not know I was so wealthy in the article of friendships. There is ——, and ———, whom you never heard of, but exemplary characters both, and excellent church-goers; and N., mine and my father's friend for nearly half a century; and the enthusiast for Wordsworth's poetry, T. N. T., a little tainted with Socinianism, it is to be feared, but constant in his attachments, and a capital critic; and ——, a sturdy old Athanasian, so that sets all to rights again; and W., the light, and warm-as-light-hearted, Janus of the London; and the translator of Dante, still a curate, modest and amiable C.; and Allan C., the large-hearted Scot; and P——r, candid and affectionate as his own poetry; and A——p, Coleridge's friend; and G——n, his more than friend; and Coleridge himself, the same to me still, as in those old evenings, when we used to sit and speculate (do you remember them, Sir?) at our old Salutation tavern, upon Pantisocracy and golden days to come on earth; and W——th (why, Sir, I might drop my rent-roll here, such goodly farms and manors have I reckoned up already. In what possession has not this last name alone estated me?—but I will go on)—and M., the noble-minded kinsman, by wedlock, of W——th; and H. C. R., unwearied in the offices of a friend; and Clarkson, almost above the narrowness of that relation, yet condescending not seldom heretofore from the labours of his world-embracing charity to bless my humble roof; and the gall-less and single-minded Dyer; and the high-minded associate of Cook, the veteran Colonel, with his lusty heart still sending cartels of defiance to old Time; and, not least, W. A., the last and steadiest left to me of that little knot of whist-players, that used to assemble weekly, for so many years, at the Queen's

Gate (you remember them, Sir?) and called Admiral Burney friend.

I will come to the point at once. I believe you will not make many exceptions to my associates so far. But I have purposely omitted some intimacies, which I do not yet repent of having contracted, with two gentlemen, diametrically opposed to yourself in principles. You will understand me to allude to the authors of Rimini and of the Table Talk. And first, of the former.

It is an error more particularly incident to persons of the correctest principles and habits, to seclude themselves from the rest of mankind, as from another species; and form into knots and clubs. The best people herding thus exclusively, are in danger of contracting a narrowness. Heat and cold, dryness and moisture, in the natural world do not fly asunder, to split the globe into sectarian parts and separations; but mingling, as they best may, correct the malignity of any single predominance. The analogy holds, I suppose, in the moral world. If all the good people were to ship themselves off to Terra Incognitas, what, in humanity's name, is to become of the refuse? If the persons, whom I have chiefly in view, have not pushed matters to this extremity yet, they carry them as far as they can go. Instead of mixing with the infidel and the freethinker—in the room of opening a negociation, to try at least to find out at which gate the error entered—they huddle close together, in a weak fear of infection, like that pusillanimous underling in Spenser—

> This is the wandering wood, this Error's den;
> A monster vile, whom God and man does hate:
> Therefore, I reed, beware. Fly, fly, quoth then
> The fearful Dwarf,

and, if they be writers in orthodox journals, addressing themselves only to the irritable passions of the unbeliever,—they proceed in a safe system of strengthening the strong hands, and confirming the valiant knees; of converting the already converted, and proselyting their own party. I am the more convinced of this from a passage in the very Treatise which occasioned this letter. It is where, having recommended to the doubter the writings of Michaelis and Lardner, you ride triumphant over the necks of all infidels, sceptics, and dissenters, from this time to the world's end, upon the wheels of two unanswerable deductions. I do not hold it meet to set down, in a Miscellaneous Compilation like this, such religious words as you have thought fit to introduce into the pages of

a petulant Literary Journal. I therefore beg leave to substitute *numerals*, and refer to the Quarterly Review (for July) for filling of them up. "Here," say you, "as in the history of 7, if these books are authentic, the events which they relate must be true; if they were written by 8, 9 is 10 and 11." Your first deduction, if it means honestly, rests upon two identical propositions; though I suspect an unfairness in one of the terms, which this would not be quite the proper place for explicating. At all events, *you* have no cause to triumph; you have not been proving the premises, but refer for satisfaction therein to very long and laborious works, which may well employ the sceptic a twelvemonth or two to digest, before he can possibly be ripe for your conclusion. When he has satisfied himself about the premises, he will concede to you the inference, I dare say, most readily.—But your latter deduction, *viz.*, that because 8 has written a book concerning 9, therefore 10 and 11 was certainly his meaning, is one of the most extraordinary conclusions *per saltum* that I have had the good fortune to meet with. As far as 10 is verbally asserted in the writings, all sects must agree with you; but you cannot be ignorant of the many various ways in which the doctrine of the * * * * * * * * * has been understood, from a low figurative expression (with the Unitarians) up to the most mysterious actuality; in which highest sense alone you and your church take it. And for 11, that there is *no other possible conclusion* —to hazard this in the face of so many thousands of Arians and Socinians, etc., who have drawn so opposite a one, is such a piece of theological hardihood, as, I think, warrants me in concluding that, when you sit down to pen theology, you do not at all consider your opponents, but have in your eye, merely and exclusively, readers of the same way of thinking with yourself, and therefore have no occasion to trouble yourself with the quality of the logic, to which you treat them.

Neither can I think, if you had had the welfare of the poor child—over whose hopeless condition you whine so lamentably and (I must think) unseasonably—seriously at heart, that you could have taken the step of sticking him up *by name*—T. H. is as good as *naming him*—to perpetuate an outrage upon the parental feelings, as long as the Quarterly Review shall last.—Was it necessary to specify an individual case, and give to Christian compassion the appearance of a personal attack? Is this the way to conciliate unbelievers, or not rather to widen the breach irreparably?

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

See p. 351

I own I could never think so considerably of myself as to decline the society of an agreeable or worthy man upon difference of opinion only. The impediments and the facilitations to a sound belief are various and inscrutable as the heart of man. Some believe upon weak principles; others cannot feel the efficacy of the strongest. One of the most candid, most upright, and single-meaning men, I ever knew, was the late Thomas Holcroft. I believe he never said one thing and meant another, in his life; and, as near as I can guess, he never acted otherwise than with the most scrupulous attention to conscience. Ought we to wish the character false, for the sake of a hollow compliment to Christianity?

Accident introduced me to the acquaintance of Mr. L. H.—and the experience of his many friendly qualities confirmed a friendship between us. You, who have been misrepresented yourself, I should hope, have not lent an idle ear to the calumnies which have been spread abroad respecting this gentleman. I was admitted to his household for some years, and do most solemnly aver that I believe him to be in his domestic relations as correct as any man. He chose an ill-judged subject for a poem; the peccant humours of which have been visited on him tenfold by the artful use, which his adversaries have made, of an *equivocal term*. The subject itself was started by Dante, but better because brieflier treated of. But the crime of the Lovers, in the Italian and the English poet, with its aggravated enormity of circumstance, is not of a kind (as the critics of the latter well knew) with those conjunctions, for which Nature herself has provided no excuse, because no temptation.—It has nothing in common with the black horrors, sung by Ford and Massinger. The familiarising of it in the tale and fable may be for that reason incidentally more contagious. In spite of Rimini, I must look upon its author as a man of taste, and a poet. He is better than so, he is one of the most cordial-minded men I ever knew, and matchless as a fire-side companion. I mean not to affront or wound your feelings when I say that in his more genial moods, he has often reminded me of you. There is the same condescending to a boyish sportiveness—in both your conversations. His hand-writing is so much the same with your own, that I have opened more than one letter of his, hoping, nay, not doubting, but it was from you, and have been disappointed (he will bear with my saying so) at the discovery of my error. L. H. is unfortunate in holding some loose and not very definite speculations (for at times I think he hardly knows whither his

premises would carry him) on marriage—the tenets, I conceive, of the Political Justice carried a little further. For any thing I could discover in his practice, they have reference, like those, to some future possible condition of society, and not to the present times. But neither for these obliquities of thinking (upon which my own conclusions are as distant as the poles asunder)—nor for his political asperities and petulancies, which are wearing out with the heats and vanities of youth—did I select him for a friend; but for qualities which fitted him for that relation. I do not know whether I flatter myself with being the occasion, but certain it is, that, touched with some misgivings for sundry harsh things which he had written aforetime against our friend C.,—before he left this country he sought a reconciliation with that gentleman (himself being his own introducer), and found it.

L. H. is now in Italy; on his departure to which land, with much regret I took my leave of him and his little family—seven of them, Sir, with their mother—and as kind a set of little people (T. H. and all), as affectionate children, as ever blessed a parent. Had you seen them, Sir, I think you could not have looked upon them as so many little Jonases—but rather as pledges of the vessel's safety, that was to bear such a freight of love.

I wish you would read Mr. H.'s lines to that same T. H., "six years old, during a sickness":

> Sleep breaks at last from out thee,
> My little patient boy—

(they are to be found on the 47th page of "Foliage")—and ask yourself how far they are out of the spirit of Christianity. I have a letter from Italy, received but the other day, into which L. H. has put as much heart, and as many friendly yearnings after old associates, and native country, as, I think, paper can well hold. It would do you no hurt to give that the perusal also.

From the *other gentleman* I neither expect nor desire (as he is well assured) any such concessions as L. H. made to C. What hath soured him, and made him to suspect his friends of infidelity towards him, when there was no such matter, I know not. I stood well with him for fifteen years (the proudest of my life), and have ever spoke my full mind of him to some, to whom his panegyric must naturally be least tasteful. I never in thought swerved from him, I never betrayed him, I never slackened in my admiration of him, I was the same to him (neither better nor worse) though he could not see it, as in the days when he

thought fit to trust me. At this instant, he may be preparing for me some compliment, above my deserts, as he has sprinkled many such among his admirable books, for which I rest his debtor; or, for any thing I know, or can guess to the contrary, he may be about to read a lecture on my weaknesses. He is welcome to them (as he was to my humble hearth), if they can divert a spleen, or ventilate a fit of sullenness. I wish he would not quarrel with the world at the rate he does; but the reconciliation must be effected by himself, and I despair of living to see that day. But, protesting against much that he has written, and some things which he chooses to do; judging him by his conversation which I enjoyed so long, and relished so deeply; or by his books, in those places where no clouding passion intervenes—I should belie my own conscience, if I said less, than that I think W. H. to be, in his natural and healthy state, one of the wisest and finest spirits breathing. So far from being ashamed of that intimacy, which was betwixt us, it is my boast that I was able for so many years to have preserved it entire; and I think I shall go to my grave without finding, or expecting to find, such another companion. But I forget my manners—you will pardon me, Sir—I return to the correspondence.—

Sir, you were pleased (you know where) to invite me to a compliance with the wholesome forms and doctrines of the Church of England. I take your advice with as much kindness, as it was meant. But I must think the invitation rather more kind than seasonable. I am a Dissenter. The last sect, with which you can remember me to have made common profession, were the Unitarians. You would think it not very pertinent, if (fearing that all was not well with you), I were gravely to invite you (for a remedy) to attend with me a course of Mr. Belsham's Lectures at Hackney. Perhaps I have scruples to some of your forms and doctrines. But if I come, am I secure of civil treatment?—The last time I was in any of your places of worship was on Easter Sunday last. I had the satisfaction of listening to a very sensible sermon of an argumentative turn, delivered with great propriety, by one of your bishops. The place was Westminster Abbey. As such religion, as I have, has always acted on me more by way of sentiment than argumentative process, I was not unwilling, after sermon ended, by no unbecoming transition, to pass over to some serious feelings, impossible to be disconnected from the sight of those old tombs, etc. But, by whose order I know not, I was debarred that privilege even for so short a space as a few minutes; and turned,

like a dog or some profane person, out into the common street; with feelings, which I could not help, but not very congenial to the day or the discourse. I do not know that I shall ever venture myself again into one of your Churches.

You had your education at Westminster; and doubtless among those dim aisles and cloisters, you must have gathered much of that devotional feeling in those young years, on which your purest mind feeds still—and may it feed! The antiquarian spirit, strong in you, and gracefully blending ever with the religious, may have been sown in you among those wrecks of splendid mortality. You owe it to the place of your education; you owe it to your learned fondness for the architecture of your ancestors; you owe it to the venerableness of your ecclesiastical establishment, which is daily lessened and called in question through these practices—to speak aloud your sense of them; never to desist raising your voice against them, till they be totally done away with and abolished; till the doors of Westminster Abbey be no longer closed against the decent, though low-in-purse, enthusiast, or blameless devotee, who must commit an injury against his family economy, if he would be indulged with a bare admission within its walls. You owe it to the decencies, which you wish to see maintained in its impressive services, that our Cathedral be no longer an object of inspection to the poor at those times only, in which they must rob from their attendance on the worship every minute which they can bestow upon the fabrick. In vain the public prints have taken up this subject, in vain such poor nameless writers as myself express their indignation. A word from you, Sir—a hint in your Journal—would be sufficient to fling open the doors of the Beautiful Temple again, as we can remember them when we were boys. At that time of life, what would the imaginative faculty (such as it is) in both of us, have suffered, if the entrance to so much reflection had been obstructed by the demand of so much silver!—If we had scraped it up to gain an occasional admission (as we certainly should have done) would the sight of those old tombs have been as impressive to us (while we had been weighing anxiously prudence against sentiment) as when the gates stood open, as those of the adjacent Park; when we could walk in at any time, as the mood brought us, for a shorter or longer time, as *that* lasted? Is the being shown over a place the same as silently for ourselves detecting the genius of it? In no part of our beloved Abbey now can a person find entrance (out of service time) under the sum of *two shillings*. The rich

and the great will smile at the anticlimax, presumed to lie in those two short words. But you can tell them, Sir, how much quiet worth, how much capacity for enlarged feeling, how much taste and genius, may coexist, especially in youth, with a purse incompetent to this demand.—A respected friend of ours, during his late visit to the metropolis, presented himself for admission to Saint Paul's. At the same time a decently clothed man, with as decent a wife, and child, were bargaining for the same indulgence. The price was only two-pence each person. The poor but decent man hesitated, desirous to go in; but there were three of them, and he turned away reluctantly. Perhaps he wished to have seen the tomb of Nelson. Perhaps the Interior of the Cathedral was his object. But in the state of his finances, even sixpence might reasonably seem too much. Tell the Aristocracy of the country (no man can do it more impressively); instruct them of what value these insignificant pieces of money, these minims to their sight, may be to their humbler brethren. Shame these Sellers out of the Temple. Show the poor, that you can sometimes think of them in some other light than as mutineers and malcontents. Conciliate them by such kind methods to their superiors, civil and ecclesiastical. Stop the mouths of the railers; and suffer your old friends, upon the old terms, again to honour and admire you. Stifle not the suggestions of your better nature with the stale evasion, that an indiscriminate admission would expose the Tombs to violation. Remember your boy-days. Did you ever see, or hear, of a mob in the Abbey, while it was free to all? Do the rabble come there, or trouble their heads about such speculations? It is all that you can do to drive them into your churches; they do not voluntarily offer themselves. They have, alas! no passion for antiquities; for tomb of king or prelate, sage or poet. If they had, they would be no longer the rabble.

For forty years that I have known the Fabrick, the only well-attested charge of violation adduced, has been—a ridiculous dismemberment committed upon the effigy of that amiable spy, Major André. And is it for this—the wanton mischief of some schoolboy, fired perhaps with raw notions of Trans-atlantic Freedom—or the remote possibility of such a mischief occurring again, so easily to be prevented by stationing a constable within the walls, if the vergers are incompetent to the duty—is it upon such wretched pretences, that the people of England are made to pay a new Peter's Pence, so long abrogated; or must content themselves with contemplating the ragged

Exterior of their Cathedral? The mischief was done about the time that you were a scholar there. Do you know any thing about the unfortunate relic?—can you help us in this emergency to find the nose?—or can you give Chantry a notion (from memory) of its pristine life and vigour? I am willing for peace sake to subscribe my guinea towards the restoration of the lamented feature.

I am, Sir, Your humble servant,

ELIA.

READERS AGAINST THE GRAIN

No one can pass through the streets, alleys, and blindest thoroughfares of this Metropolis, without surprise at the number of shops opened everywhere for the sale of cheap publications —not blasphemy and sedition—nor altogether flimsy periodicals, though the latter abound to a surfeit—but I mean fair reprints of good old books. Fielding, Smollett, the Poets, Historians, are daily becoming accessible to the purses of poor people. I cannot behold this result from the enlargement of the reading public without congratulations to my country. But as every blessing has its wrong side, it is with aversion I behold springing up with this phenomenon a race of *Readers against the grain.* Young men who thirty years ago would have been play-goers, punch-drinkers, cricketers, etc. with one accord are now—Readers!—a change in some respects, perhaps, salutary; but I liked the old way best. Then people read because they liked reading. He must have been indigent indeed, and, as times went then, probably unable to enjoy a book, who from one little circulating library or another (those slandered benefactions to the public) could not pick out an odd volume to satisfy the intervals of the workshop and the desk. Then, if a man told you that he "loved reading mightily, but had no books," you might be sure that in the first assertion at least he was mistaken. Neither had he, perhaps, the materials that should enliven a punch-bowl in his own cellar; but if the rogue loved his liquor, he would quickly find out where the arrack, the lemons, and the sugar dwelt—he would speedily find out the circulating shop for them. I will illustrate this from my own observation.

It may detract a little from the gentility of your columns when I tell your Readers that I am—what I hinted at in my last

—a Bank Clerk. Three-and-thirty years ago, when I took my first station at the desk, out of as many fellows in office one or two there were that had read a little. One could give a pretty good account of the *Spectator*. A second knew *Tom Jones*. A third recommended *Telemachus*. One went so far as to quote *Hudibras*, and was looked on as a phenomenon. But the far greater number neither cared for books, nor affected to care. They were, as I said, in their leisure hours, cricketers, punch-drinkers, play-goers, and the rest. Times are altered now. We are all readers; our young men are split up into so many book-clubs, knots of literati; we criticise; we read the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh*, I assure you; and instead of the old, honest, unpretending literature so becoming to our profession —we read and *judge* of everything. I have something to do in these book-clubs, and know the trick and mystery of it. Every new publication that is likely to make a noise, must be had at any rate. By some they are devoured with avidity. These would have been readers in the old time I speak of. The only loss is, that for the good old reading of Addison or Fielding's days is substituted that never-ending flow of thin novelties which are kept up like a ball, leaving no possible time for better things, and threatening in the issue to bury or sweep away from the earth the memory of their nobler predecessors. We read to say that we have read. No reading can keep pace with the writing of this age, but we pant and toil after it as fast as we can. I smile to see an honest lad, who ought to be at trap-ball, labouring up hill against this giant load, taking his toil for a pleasure, and with that utter incapacity for reading which *betrays itself by a certain silent movement of the lips when the reader reads to himself*, undertaking the infinite contents of fugitive poetry, or travels, what not—to see them with their snail-pace undertaking so vast a journey as might make faint a giant's speed; keeping a volume, which a real reader would get through in an hour, three, four, five, six days, and returning it with the last leaf but one folded down. These are your readers against the grain, who yet *must* read or be thought nothing of—who, crawling through a book with tortoise-pace, go creeping to the next Review to learn what they shall say of it. Upon my soul, I pity the honest fellows mightily. The self-denials of virtue are nothing to the patience of these self-tormentors. If I hate one day before another, it is the accursed first day of the month, when a load of periodicals is ushered in and distributed to feed the reluctant monster. How it gapes

and takes in its prescribed diet, as little savoury as that which Daniel ministered to that Apocryphal dragon, and not more wholesome! Is there no stopping the eternal wheels of the Press for a half century or two, till the nation recover its senses? Must we *magazine* it and *review* at this sickening rate for ever? Shall we never again read to be *amused*? but to judge, to criticise, to talk about it and about it? Farewell, old honest delight taken in books not quite contemporary, before this plague-token of modern endless novelties broke out upon us—farewell to reading for its own sake!

Rather than follow in the train of this insatiable monster of modern reading, I would forswear my spectacles, play at put, mend pens, kill fleas, stand on one leg, shell peas, or do whatsoever ignoble diversion you shall put me to. Alas! I am hurried on in the vortex. I die of new books, or the everlasting talk about them. I faint of Longmans. I sicken of the Constables. Blackwood and Cadell have me by the throat.

I will go and relieve myself with a page of honest John Bunyan, or Tom Brown. Tom anybody will do, so long as they are not of this whiffling century.

Your Old-fashioned Correspondent,

LEPUS.

MORTIFICATIONS OF AN AUTHOR

IF you have a son or daughter inclined to the folly of Authorship, pray warn them by my example of the mortifications which are the constant attendants upon it. I do not advert to the trite instances of unfair and malignant *reviewing*, though that is not nothing—but to the mortifications they may expect from their friends and common acquaintance. I have been a dabbler this way, and cannot resist flinging out my thoughts occasionally in periodical publications. I was the chief support of the * * * * Magazine while it lasted, under the signature of OLINDO. All my friends guessed, or rather knew, who OLINDO was; but I never knew one who did not take a pleasure in affecting to be ignorant of it. One would ask me, whether I had read that clever article in the * * * * Magazine of this month (and here I began to prick up my ears) signed "ZEKIEL HOMESPUN."—(Then my ears would flap down again.)—Another would praise the verses of "X.Y.Z."; a third stood up for the

"Gipsy Stranger"; a long rambling tale in prose, with all the lengthiness, and none of the fine-heartedness and gush of soul of A—n C—m to recommend it. But never in a single instance was Olindo even hinted at. I have sifted, I have pumped them (as the vulgar phrase is) till my heart ached, to extort a pittance of acknowledgment. I have descended to arts below any animal but *an Author*, who is veritably the meanest of Heaven's creatures, and my vanity has returned upon myself ungratified, to choke me. When I could bear their silence no longer and have ventured to ask them how they liked "such a Paper"; a cold, "O! was that yours?" is the utmost I have ever obtained from them. A fellow sits at my desk this morning, spelling *The New Times* over from head to tail, and I know that he will purposely skip over this article because he suspects me to be Lepus. So confident am I of this, and of his deliberate purpose to torment me, that I have a great mind to give you his character—knowing that he will not read it—but I forbear him at present. They have two ways of doing it. "The * * * * Magazine is very sprightly this month, Anticlericus has some good hits, the Old Baker is capital," and so forth. Or the same Magazine is "unusually dull this month," especially when Olindo happens to have an article better or longer than usual. I publish a book now and then. In the very nick of its novelty, the honeymoon, as it were—when with pride I have placed my bantling on my own shelves in company with its betters, a friend will drop in and ask me if I have anything new; then, carefully eluding mine, he will take down *The Angel of the World*, or *Barry Cornwall*, and beg me to lend it him. "He is particularly careful of new books." But he never borrows *me*. To one Lady I lent a little Novel of mine, a thing of about two hours' reading at most, and she returned it after five weeks' keeping, with an apology that she had "so small time for reading." I found it doubled down at the last leaf but one—just at the crisis of what I conceived to be a very affecting catastrophe. O if you *write*, dear Reader, keep the secret inviolable from your most familiar friends. Do not let your own father, brother, or your uncle know it: not even your wife. I know a Lady who prides herself upon "not reading any of her husband's publications," though she swallows all the trash she can pick up besides; and yet her husband in the world's eye is a very respectable author, and has written some Novels in particular that are in high estimation. Write—and all your friends will hate you—all will suspect you. Are you happy in drawing a character?

Show it not for yours. Not one of your acquaintance but will surmise that you meant him or her—no matter how discordant from their own. Let it be diametrically different, their fancy will extract from it some lines of a likeness. I lost a friend—a most valuable one, by showing him a whimsical draught of a miser. He himself is remarkable for generosity, even to carelessness in money matters; but there was an expression in it, out of Juvenal, about an attic—a place where pigeons are fed; and my friend kept pigeons. All the waters in the Danube cannot wash it out of his pate to this day, but that in my miser I was making reflections upon *him*. To conclude, no creature is so craving after applause, and so starved and famished for it, as an author: none so pitiful, and so little pitied. He sets himself up *prima facie* as something different from his brethren, and they never forgive him. 'Tis the fable of the little birds hooting at the birds of Pallas.

LEPUS.

COMIC TALES, ETC.

BY C. DIBDIN THE YOUNGER

IN this age of hyper-poetic flights, and talent in a frenzy aping genius, it is consolatory to see a little volume of verse in the good old sober manner of Queen Ann's days, when verse walked high, rather than flew, and sought its nutriment upon this diurnal sphere, not rapt above the moon. To a lover of Chess, who at the same time can relish the Rape of the Lock, the poem which forms the distinguishing feature of this volume cannot fail to impart pleasure. It is a mock heroic of course, descriptive of the Game; and the Homeric parodies are adroit and numerous. The names of the mortal combatants, Blanc, Blanche, Croesieroi, Reinelawne, Sir Garderoi, Sir Gardereene, etc. on one side, with Niger, Nigra, Mitrex, Mitre regina, Sir Rexensor, Sir Reginalde, etc. on the other, are happily conceived, and the strife thickens to the conclusion. The Gods and Goddesses are the Games of Chance, or Mixed Chance, Faro, Whist, Loo, etc. in all their attributes, with old Hazard for their Jupiter, a fine gruff, grumbling Dice-compeller, whose dice-box is to him what the awful Homeric chain was to his Prototype. The soft blandishments of *Joan*, the gentle *Pope*—

Intriguing Hebe to the God of Game—

wrings from his austere Deity his slow permission for the interference of the Olympians in the fight below, and accordingly they range on either side, as in the Iliad; and by their infusion of passions, caprices, impulses, peculiar to the nature of their own warfare, confound and embroil the pure contest of skill through five Cantos very entertainingly. We confess we are more at home in Hoyle than in Phillidor; but by the help of the notes, we played the game through ourselves very tolerably. We subjoin an exquisite simile, with which the third Canto commences—a description of the Morning, redolent of Swift and Gay:

> Now, Morning yawning, rais'd her from her bed,
> Slipp'd on her wrapper blue and 'kerchief red,
> And took from Night the key of Sleep's abode—
> For Night within that mansion had bestow'd
> The Hours of Day; now, turn and turn about,
> Morn takes the key, and lets the Day Hours out;
> Laughing they issue from the ebon gate,
> And Night walks in. As when, in drowsy state.
> Some *watchman*, wed to *one who chars all day*,
> Takes to his lodgings door his creeping way;
> His Rib, arising, lets him in to sleep,
> While she emerges to scrub, dust, and sweep.

ODES AND ADDRESSES TO GREAT PEOPLE

THE Odes and Addresses are Thirteen in number. The metre is happily varied from the familiar epistolary verse to the Eton College stanza, and loftier parodies of Gray, etc. Among the Great People addressed are—Graham the Aeronaut, Mr. M'Adam, Mrs. Fry, Martin of Galway, R. W. Elliston, Esq., etc., etc., from which the reader may gather that the Addresses are not mere unqualified or fulsome dedications. They have, in fact, a fund of fun. They remind us of Peter Pindar, and sometimes of Colman; they have almost as much humour, and they have rather more wit. A too great aim at brilliancy is their excess. We do not think that in any work there can be too much brilliancy *of the same kind*. We are not of opinion with those critics who condemn Cowley for excess of wit. We could have borne with a double portion of it, and have never cried "Hold." What we allude to is a mixture of *incompatible* kinds; the perpetual recurrence of *puns* in these little effusions of humour; puns uncalled for, and perfectly gratuitous, a sort of make-weight; puns, which, if *missed*, leave the sense and the drollery

full and perfect without them. You may read any one of the addresses, and not catch a quibble in it, and it shall be just as good, nay better; for the addition of said quibble only serves to puzzle with an unnecessary double meaning. A pun is good when it can rely on its single self; but, called in as an accessary, it weakens—unless it *makes* the humour, it *enfeebles* it. All this critical posing is not quite a fair introduction to the pleasant specimen we subjoin, from the pleasantest *morceau* in the volume, which we throw upon the taste of our pantomime-going readers, with a hearty confidence in their sympathies.—The subject is no less a one than their and our Joe—the immortal Grimaldi.

Joseph! they say thou'st left the stage,
To toddle down the hill of life,
And taste the flannel'd ease of age,
Apart from pantomimic strife.

* * * * *

Ah! where is now thy rolling head!
Thy winking, reeling, *drunken* eyes,
(As old Catullus would have said);
Thy oven-mouth that swallow'd pies—
Enormous hunger—monstrous drowth!—
Thy pockets greedy as thy mouth!

Ah where thy ears, so often cuff'd!
Thy funny, flapping, filching hands!
Thy partridge body, always stuff'd
With waifs, and strays, and contrabands!
Thy *foot*—like Berkeley's *Foote*—for why?
'Twas often made to *wipe an eye.* ⋊

Ah where thy legs, that witty pair!
For "great wits jump," and so did they!
Lord! how they leap'd in lamp-light air!
Caper'd and bounc'd—and strode away!
That Time should tame the legs, alack!
I've seen spring through an Almanack!

But bounds will have their bound ⋊—the shocks
Of Time will cramp the nimblest toes;
And those that frisked in silken clocks,
May look to limp in fleecy hose.

* * * * *

And gout, that owns no odds between
The toe of Czar, and toe of Clown,
Will visit—but I did not mean
To moralise, though I am grown
Thus sad—— Thy going seem'd to beat
A muffled drum for Fun's retreat.

Oh, how will thy departure cloud
The lamp-light of the little breast!
The Christmas child will grieve aloud
To miss his broadest friend and best.

* * * * *

For who like thee could ever stride
Some dozen paces to the mile!
The motley, medley, *coach* provide—
Or, like Joe Frankenstein, compile
The *vegetable man* complete!—
A proper Covent Garden feat!

Or, who like thee, could ever drink,
Or eat—swill, swallow—bolt—and choke!
Nod, weep, and hiccup—sneeze, and wink!
Thy very yawn was quite a joke!
Tho' Joseph, junior, acts not ill,
"There's no Fool like the old Fool" still.

All that is descriptive here is excellent.—It seems to us next in merit to some of Cibber's dramatic comic portraitures. Joe, the absolute Joe, lives again in every line.—We have just set our mark ⋈ against two puns to exemplify our foregoing remarks. The first of them is a positive stop to the current of our joyous feelings. What possible analogy, or contrast even, can there be between a comic gesture of Grimaldi, and the serious misfortunes of the lady, except in verbal sound purely? The second is good, because the humour lies in the pun, and moreover has reference to Milton's

at one bound,
High overleaps all bounds.

A pun is a humble companion to wit, but disdains to be a train-bearer merely. But these poems are rich in fancies, which, in truth, needed not such aid.

ON THE SECONDARY NOVELS OF DE FOE

It has happened not seldom that one work of some author has so transcendently surpassed in execution the rest of his compositions, that the world has agreed to pass a sentence of dismissal upon the latter, and to consign them to total neglect and oblivion. It has done wisely in this, not to suffer the contemplation of excellencies of a lower standard to abate, or stand in the way of the pleasure it has agreed to receive from the master-piece.

Again it has happened, that from no inferior merit of execution in the rest, but from superior good fortune in the choice of its subject, some single work shall have been suffered to eclipse, and cast into the shades the deserts of its less fortunate brethren. This has been done with more or less injustice in the case of

the popular allegory of Bunyan, in which the beautiful and scriptural image of a pilgrim or wayfarer (we are all such upon earth), addressing itself intelligibly and feelingly to the bosoms of all, has silenced, and made almost to be forgotten, the more awful and scarcely less tender beauties of the "Holy War made by Shaddai upon Diabolus," of the same author; a romance less happy in its subject, but surely well worthy of a secondary immortality. But in no instance has this excluding partiality been exerted with more unfairness than against what may be termed the secondary novels or romances of De Foe.

While all ages and descriptions of people hang delighted over the "Adventures of Robinson Crusoe," and shall continue to do so we trust while the world lasts, how few comparatively will bear to be told, that there exist other fictitious narratives by the same writer—four of them at least of no inferior interest, except what results from a less felicitous choice of situation. Roxana — Singleton — Moll Flanders — Colonel Jack — are all genuine offspring of the same father. They bear the veritable impress of De Foe. An unpractised midwife that would not swear to the nose, lip, forehead, and eye, of every one of them! They are in their way as full of incident, and some of them every bit as romantic; only they want the uninhabited Island, and the charm that has bewitched the world, of the striking solitary situation.

But are there no solitudes out of the cave and the desert? or cannot the heart in the midst of crowds feel frightfully alone? Singleton, on the world of waters, prowling about with pirates less merciful than the creatures of any howling wilderness; is he not alone, with the faces of men about him, but without a guide that can conduct him through the mists of educational and habitual ignorance; or a fellow-heart that can interpret to him the new-born yearnings and aspirations of an unpractised penitence? Or when the boy Colonel Jack, in the loneliness of the heart, (the worst solitude), goes to hide his ill-purchased treasure in the hollow tree by night, and miraculously loses, and miraculously finds it again — whom hath he there to sympathise with him? or of what sort are his associates?

The narrative manner of De Foe has a naturalness about it beyond that of any other novel or romance writer. His fictions have all the air of true stories. It is impossible to believe, while you are reading them, that a real person is not narrating to you everywhere nothing but what really happened to himself. To this, the extreme *homeliness* of their style mainly contributes.

We use the word in its best and heartiest sense—that which comes *home* to the reader. The narrators everywhere are chosen from low life, or have had their origin in it; therefore they tell their own tales, (Mr. Coleridge has anticipated us in this remark,) as persons in their degree are observed to do, with infinite repetition, and an overacted exactness, lest the hearer should not have minded, or have forgotten, some things that had been told before. Hence the emphatic sentences marked in the good old (but deserted) Italic type; and hence, too, the frequent interposition of the reminding old colloquial parenthesis, "I say"—"mind"—and the like, when the story-teller repeats what, to a practised reader, might appear to have been sufficiently insisted upon before: which made an ingenious critic observe, that his works, in this kind, were excellent reading for the kitchen. And, in truth, the heroes and heroines of De Foe can never again hope to be popular with a much higher class of readers, than that of the servant-maid or the sailor; Crusoe keeps its rank only by tough prescription; Singleton, the Pirate—Colonel Jack, the thief—Moll Flanders, both thief and harlot—Roxana, harlot and something worse—would be startling ingredients in the bill of fare of modern literary delicacies. But, then, what pirates, what thieves, and what harlots, is *the thief*, *the harlot*, and *the pirate* of De Foe? We would not hesitate to say, that in no other book of fiction, where the lives of such characters are described, is guilt and delinquency made less seductive, or the suffering made more closely to follow the commission, or the penitence more earnest or more bleeding, or the intervening flashes of religious visitation, upon the rude and uninstructed soul, more meltingly and fearfully painted. They, in this, come near to the tenderness of Bunyan; while the livelier pictures and incidents in them, as in Hogarth or in Fielding, tend to diminish that "fastidiousness to the concerns and pursuits of common life, which an unrestrained passion for the ideal and the sentimental is in danger of producing."

CLARENCE SONGS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR"

Sir,—You have a question in your paper, what songs, and whether any of any value, were written upon Prince William, our present Sovereign. Can it have escaped you, that the very popular song and tune of "Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill" had reference to a supposed partiality of that Prince for a lass of Richmond? I have heard who she was, but now forget. I think it was a damsel of quality. I remember, when I was a school-boy at Christ's Hospital, about eight-and-forty years since, having had my hearing stunned with the burthen (which alone I retain) of some ballad in praise and augury of the Princely Midshipman:

> He's royal, he's noble, he's chosen by me,[1]
> Britain's Isle to protect, and reign Lord of the Sea!

and my old ears yet ring with it.

Allusions to the same personage were at that time rife in innumerable ballads, under the notion of a *sweet William*; but the ballads are obliterated. The song of "Sweet William Taylor, walking with his lady gay"—from the identity of names, I suppose—usually followed the Neptunian song. The late Tom Sheridan bears away the credit of this. But was it possible he could have been the author of it in 1782 or 1783? Perhaps he made it his own by communicating a deeper tinge of vulgarity to it, exchanging "William" for "Billy." I think the rogue snugged it in as his own, hoping it was a forgotten ditty.

C. L.

CLARENCE SONGS, No. II

Sir,—A friend has just reminded me of a ballad made on occasion of some shipboard scrape into which our Royal Midshipman had fallen; in which, with a *romantic licence*, the rank of the young sailor is supposed to have been unknown, and a corporal infliction about to have been put into execution. This is all he can recover of it. He was

> order'd to undress, Sir!
> But very soon they did espy
> The star upon his breast, Sir;
> And on their knees they soon did fall,
> And all for mercy soon did call.

[1] It is Neptune who predicts this.

The burden was "Long live Duke William," or something to that effect. So you see, his Majesty has enjoyed his laureats by anticipation. C. L.

I know the town swarmed with these Clarence songs in the heyday of his young popularity. Where are they?

THE LATIN POEMS OF VINCENT BOURNE

A COMPLETE translation of these poems is a desideratum in our literature. Cowper has done *one* at least, out of the four which he has given us, with a felicity almost unapproachable. Few of our readers can be ignorant of the delightful lines beginning with

There is a bird, which by its coat——

A recent writer has lately added nine more to the number; we wish he would proceed with the remainder, for of all modern Latinity, that of Vincent Bourne is the most to our taste. He is "so Latin," and yet "so English" all the while. In diction worthy of the Augustan age, he presents us with no images that are not familiar to his countrymen. His topics are even closelier drawn; they are not so properly English, as *Londonish*. From the streets, and from the alleys, of his beloved metropolis he culled his objects, which he has invested with an Hogarthian richness of colouring. No town picture by that artist can go beyond his BALLAD-SINGERS; Gay's TRIVIA alone, in verse, comes up to the life and humour of it.

Quâ septem vicos conterminat una columna,
Consistunt nymphæ Sirenum ex agmine binæ;
Stramineum capiti tegimen, collumque per omne
Ingentes electri orbes: utrique pependit
Crustato vestis cœno, limoque rigescens
Crure usque à medio calcem defluxit ad imum.
Exiguam secum pendentem ex ubere natam
Altera; venales dextrà tulit altera chartas.
His vix dispositis, pueri innuptæque puellæ
Accurrunt: sutor primus, cui lorea vitta
Impediit crines, humili, quæ proxima stabat,
Proruit è cellâ, chartas, si fortè placerent,
Empturus; namque ille etiam se carmine multo
Oblectat, longos solus quo rite labores
Diminuit, fallitque hybernæ tædia noctis.
Collecti murmur sensim increbescere vulgi
Audit; et excurrit nudis ancilla lacertis.
Incudem follesque et opus fabrile relinquens,
Se densæ immiscet plebi niger ora Pyracmon.

It juxtà, depressum ingens cui mantica tergum
Incurvat, tardo passu; simul ille coronam
Aspectat vulgi, spe carminis arrigit aures;
Statque moræ patiens, humeris nec pondera sentit.
Sic ubi Tartareum regem Rhodopeïus Orpheus
Threiciis studuit fidibus mulcere, laboris
Immemor, Æolides stupuit modulamina plectri
Nec sensit funesti onera incumbentia saxi.
Sæpe interventus rhedæ crepitantis, ab illo
Vicorum, aut illo, stipantem hinc inde catervam
Dividit; at rursus coeunt, ubi transiit illa,
Ut coeunt rursus, puppis quas dividit, undæ.
Canticulæ interea narraverat argumentum
Altera Sirenum, infidi perjuria nautæ,
Deceptamque dolo nympham: tum flebile carmen
Flebilibus movit numeris, quos altera versu
Alterno excepit: patulis stant rictibus omnes:
Dextram ille acclinat, lævam ille attentiùs aurem,
Promissum carmen captare paratus hiatu.
Longa referre mora est, animum quâ vicerit arte
Virgineum juvenis. Jam poscunt undique chartas
Protensæ emptorum dextræ, quas illa vel illa
Distribuit, cantatque simul: neque ferreus iste
Est usquam auditor, dulcis cui lene camœna
Non adhibet tormentum, et furtivum elicit assem.
Stat medios inter baculoque innititur Irus;
Nec tamen hic loculo parcit, sed prodigus æris
Emptor adest, solvit pretium, carmenque requirit.
Fors juxtà adstabat vetula iracundior æquo;
Quæ loculo ex imo invitum, longúmque latentem
Depromens vix tandem obolum, "cedo, fœmina, chartam,"
Inquit; "ut æternum monumentum in pariete figam,
Cum Laribus mansurum ipsis, quàm credula nymphis
Pectora sint; fraudis quàm plena et perfida Nautis."

Where seven fair Streets to one tall Column [1] draw,
Two Nymphs have ta'en their stand, in hats of straw;
Their yellower necks huge heads of amber grace,
And by their trade they're of the Sirens' race.
With cloak loose-pinn'd on each, that has been red,
But long with dust and dirt discoloured
Belies its hue; in mud behind, before,
From heel to middle leg becrusted o'er.
One a small infant at the breast does bear;
And one in her right hand her tuneful ware,
Which she would vend. Their station scarce is taken,
When youths and maids flock round. His stall forsaken,
Forth comes a Son of Crispin, leathern-capt,
Prepared to buy a ballad, if one apt
To move his fancy offers. Crispin's sons
Have, from uncounted time, with ale and buns
Cherish'd the gift of *Song*, which sorrow quells;
And, working single in their low-rooft cells,
Oft cheat the tedium of a winter's night
With anthems warbled in the Muses' spight.
Who now hath caught the alarm? the Servant Maid
Hath heard a buzz at distance; and, afraid

---

[1] Seven Dials.

To miss a note, with elbows red comes out,
Leaving his forge to cool, Pyracmon stout
Thrusts in his unwash'd visage. He stands by,
Who the hard trade of Porterage does ply
With stooping shoulders. What cares he? he sees
The assembled ring, nor heeds his tottering knees,
But pricks his ears up with the hopes of song.
So, while the Bard of Rhodope his wrong
Bewail'd to Proserpine on Thracian strings
The tasks of gloomy Orcus lost their stings,
And stone-vext Sysiphus forgets his load.
Hither and thither from the sevenfold road
Some cart or waggon crosses, which divides
The close-wedged audience; but, as when the tides
To ploughing ships give way, the ship being past,
They re-unite, so these unite as fast.
The older Songstress hitherto has spent
Her elocution in the argument
Of their great Song in prose; to wit, the woes
Which Maiden true to faithless Sailor owes—
Ah "*Wandering He!*"—which now in loftier verse
Pathetic they alternately rehearse.
All gaping wait the event. This critic opes
His right ear to the strain. The other hopes
To catch it better with his left. Long trade
It were to tell, how the deluded Maid
A victim fell. And now right greedily
All hands are stretching forth the songs to buy,
That are so tragical; which She, and She,
Deals out, and *sings the while*; nor can there be
A breast so obdurate here, that will hold back
His contribution from the gentle rack
Of Music's pleasing torture. Irus' self,
The staff-propt Beggar, his thin-gotten pelf
Brings out from pouch, where squalid farthings rest,
And boldly claims his ballad with the rest.
An old Dame only lingers. To her purse
The penny sticks. At length, with harmless curse,
"Give me," she cries—"I'll paste it on my wall,
While the wall lasts, to show what ills befal
Fond hearts, seduced from Innocency's way;
How Maidens fall, and Mariners betray."

In the same style of familiar painting, and replete with the same images of town life, picturesque as it was comparatively in the days of Gay, and of Hogarth, are the various Poematia—to the "Bellman"—"Billingsgate"—the "Law Courts"—the "Licensed Victualler"—the "Quack"—the "Quakers' Meeting"—*cum multis aliis*—of this most classical of Cockney Poets. In a different strain is the following piece of tenderness:

IN STATUAM SEPULCHRALEM INFANTIS DORMIENTIS

Infans venuste, qui, sacros dulces agens
In hoc sopores marmore,
Placidissimâ quiete compôstus jaces
Et inscius culpæ et metûs,

Somno fruaris, docta quam dedit manus
Sculptoris; et somno simul,
Quem nescit artifex vel ars effingere,
Fruaris innocentiæ.

Beautiful Infant, who dost keep
Thy posture here, and sleep'st a marble sleep,
May the repose unbroken be,
Which the fine artist's hand hath lent to thee!
While thou enjoy'st along with it
That which no Art or Craft could ever hit,
Or counterfeit to mortal sense,
The Heav'n-infused sleep of innocence.

We have selected these two versions from a little volume lately published by Mr. Lamb, to which he has strangely given the misnomer of "Album Verses."

Album Verses! why, in the whole collection there are not twenty pages out of one hundred and fifty (and cast the acrostics in, to swell the amount) that have the smallest title to come under this denomination. There is a Tragic Drama, filling up more than a third of the book. The rest is composed of—Translations from V. Bourne, nine in number—just so many Verses, and no more, expressly written for Albums—and the rest might have been written anywhere. But Mr. L. will be wiser another time, than to stand Godfather to his own poetry. A sensible Publisher is always the best names-man on these occasions.

But if to write in Albums be a sin, Lord help Wordsworth—Coleridge—Southey—Sir Walter himself—who have not been always able to resist the solicitations of the fair owners of these modern nuisances. Southey has owned to some score, and Mr. L.'s offences in this kind, we have said, do not exceed the number of the Muses. To this may be said even of them, that they are not vague verses—to the Moon, or to the Nightingale—that will fit any place—but strictly appropriate to the person that they were intended to gratify; or to the species of chronicle which they were destined to be recorded in. The Verses to a "Clergyman's Lady"—to the "Wife of a learned Serjeant"—to a "Young Quaker"—could have appeared only in an Album, and only in that particular person's Album they were composed for.

We are no friend to Albums. We early set our faces against them in a short copy of verses, which we publish only for our own justification. To the question—

WHAT IS AN ALBUM?

'Tis a Book kept by modern young Ladies for show,
Of which their plain Grandmothers nothing did know;

A Medley of Scraps, half verse and half prose,
And some things not very like either, God knows;
Where wise folk and simple alike do combine,
And you write *your* nonsense, that I may write *mine*.
Throw in a fine Landscape, to make it complete—
A Flower-piece—a Foreground—all tinted so neat,
As Nature herself, could she see it, would strike
With envy to think that she ne'er did the like.
Next forget not to stuff it with Autographs plenty,
All writ in a style so genteel, and so dainty,
They no more resemble folk's ord'nary writing,
Than lines, penn'd with pains, do extemp'ral enditing;
Or our every day countenance (pardon the stricture)
The faces we make when we sit for our picture.
Thus you have, dearest ——, an Album complete . . .

We forget the rest—but seriously we deprecate with all our powers the unfeminine practice of this novel species of importunity. We have known Young Ladies—ay, and of those who have been modest and retiring enough upon other occasions—in quest of these delicacies, to besiege, and storm by violence, the closets and privatest retirements of a literary man, to whom they have had an imperfect, or, perhaps, no introduction at all. But the disease has gone forth. Like the daughters of the horseleech in the Proverbs, the requisition of every female now is *Contribute, Contribute*. From the Land's End to Farthest Thule the cry has gone out, and who shall resist it? Assuming then, that Album Verses *will* be written, where was the harm, if Mr. L. first taught us how they might be best, and most characteristically written?

Amid the vague, dreamy, wordy, *matterless* Poetry of this empty age, the verses of such a writer as Bourne (who was a Latin Prior) are invaluable. They fix upon *something*; they ally themselves to common life and objects; their good nature is a Catholicon, sanative of coxcombry, of heartlessness, and of fastidiousness. *Vale, Lepidissimum Caput.*[1]

[1] Of this writer we only know, that he was an usher some seventy years since at Westminster School; and that Dr. Johnson (who knew him, speaks of him always affectionately as "poor Vinny Bourne."

SONNETS BY EDWARD MOXON

(*Printed for private circulation only*)

A COPY of this unassuming work has fallen in our way. We are critics on *publications* only. It is like criticising a domestic conversation, or a friendly letter, to notice a little book, professedly not meant for the public eye. But we are pleased, and pleasure will speak out when discretion whispers it to be still. The author has professional reasons to be private. With them we have nothing to do, but to say, that if unabating industry, integrity above his avocation, unparalleled success for the short time he has entered upon it, are any auguries of success, this notice of ours will not hinder his calling. We have no parallel for this mixed character—qualities united seemingly at farthest variance—except in fine old Humphrey Mosely, the *stationer* (so were booksellers termed in the good old times), who, for love only, not for lucre, ushered into the world the first poems of Waller, the Juvenilia of Milton, beside a lesser galaxy of the poets of his day, with *Prefaces*, of his own honest composing, worthy of the strains they preluded to. Turn, reader, to his introduction to the Minor Poems of Milton, and say, if that soul, which inspirits it, worked for gain. H. M. (bibliomanists will gladlier recognise him by his initials) was, in his day, what we hope E. M. will prove in his, the fosterer of poetry, not merely the sordid trader in it. We must steal a sonnet or two from this sealed book, to justify our expectations. The first shall be "To the Nightingale": the originality of the concluding thought, and general sweetness of the versification, make us, reluctantly almost, give it the preference.

> Lone midnight-soothing melancholy bird,
> That send'st such music to my sleepless soul,
> Chaining her faculties in fast controul,
> Few listen to thy song; yet I have heard,
> When Man and Nature slept, nor aspen stirr'd,
> Thy mournful voice, sweet vigil of the sleeping—
> And liken'd thee to some angelic mind,
> That sits and mourns for erring mortals weeping;
> The genius, not of groves, but of mankind,
> Watch at this solemn hour o'er millions keeping.
> In Eden's bowers, as mighty poets tell,
> Did'st thou repeat, as now, that wailing call—
> Those sorrowing notes might seem, sad Philomel,
> Prophetic to have mourn'd of *man* the *fall*.

One more, and we have done. We mistake, if a Petrarch-like delicacy is not to be found in the following:

Methought my love was dead. O 'twas a night
Of dreary weeping, and of bitter woe!
Methought I saw her lovely spirit go
With lingering looks into yon star so bright,
Which then assumed such a beauteous light,
That all the fires in heaven compared with this
Were scarce perceptible to my weak sight.
There seem'd henceforth the haven of my bliss;
To that I turn'd with fervency of soul,
And pray'd that morn might never break again,
But o'er me that planet still remain.
Alas! o'er it my vows had no controul.
The lone star set: I woke; full glad, I deem,
To find my sorrow but a *Lover's Dream*!

ON THE DEATH OF COLERIDGE

When I heard of the death of Coleridge, it was without grief. It seemed to me that he long had been on the confines of the next world,—that he had a hunger for eternity. I grieved then that I could not grieve. But since, I feel how great a part he was of me. His great and dear spirit haunts me. I cannot think a thought, I cannot make a criticism on men and books, without an ineffectual turning and reference to him. He was the proof and touchstone of all my cogitations. He was a Grecian (or in the first form) at Christ's Hospital, where I was deputy Grecian; and the same subordination and deference to him I have preserved through a life-long acquaintance. Great in his writings, he was greatest in his conversation. In him was disproved that old maxim, that we should allow every one his share of talk. He would talk from morn to dewy eve, nor cease till far midnight, yet who ever would interrupt him,—who would obstruct that continuous flow of converse, fetched from Helicon or Zion? He had the tact of making the unintelligible seem plain. Many who read the abstruser parts of his "Friend" would complain that his works did not answer to his spoken wisdom. They were identical. But he had a tone in oral delivery, which seemed to convey sense to those who were otherwise imperfect recipients. He was my fifty-years-old friend without a dissension. Never saw I his likeness, nor probably the world can see again. I seem to love the house he died at more passionately than when he lived. I love the faithful Gilmans more than while they exercised their virtues towards him living. What was his mansion is consecrated to me a chapel.

Chs. Lamb.

Edmonton, *Nov.* 21, 1834.

FRAGMENTS OF CRITICISM: I

(1) The different way in which the same story may be told by different persons was never more strikingly illustrated than by the manner in which the celebrated Jeremy Collier has described the effects of Timotheus's music upon Alexander, in the second part of his Essays. We all know how Dryden has treated the subject. Let us now hear his great contemporary and antagonist: "Timotheus, a Grecian," says Collier, "was so great a master, that he could make a man storm and swagger like a tempest; and then, by altering the notes and the time, he could take him down again, and sweeten his humour in a trice. One time, when Alexander was at dinner, the man played him a Phrygian air. The Prince immediately rises, snatches up his lance, and puts himself into a posture of fighting; and the retreat was no sooner sounded by the change of harmony than his arms were grounded and his fire extinct; and he sat down as orderly as if he had come from one of Aristotle's lectures. I warrant you, Demosthenes would have been flourishing about such a business a long hour, and may be not have done it neither. But Timotheus had a nearer cut to the soul: he could neck a passion at a stroke, and lay it asleep. Pythagoras once met with a parcel of drunken fellows, who were likely to be troublesome enough. He presently orders music to play grave, and chops into a Dorian. Upon this they all threw away their garlands, and were as sober and as shamefaced as one would wish." It is evident that Dryden in his inspired Ode, and Collier in all this pudder of prose, meant the same thing. But what a work does the latter make with his "necking a passion at a stroke," "making a man storm and swagger like a tempest," and then "taking him down, and sweeting his humour in a trice"! What in Dryden is "softly sweet in Lydian measures," Collier calls "chopping into a Dorian." This Collier was the same, who, in his Biographical Dictionary, says of Shakspeare, that "though his genius generally was jocular, and inclining to festivity, yet *he could when he pleased be serious as any body*."

(2) Oh the comfort of sitting down heartily to an old folio and thinking surely that the next hour or two will be your own!—and the misery of being defeated by the useless call of somebody, who is come to tell you that he has just come from hearing Mr. Irving! What is that to you? Let him go home, and digest what the good man has said. You are at your chapel, in your oratory.

(3) Samuel Johnson, whom, to distinguish from the doctor, we may call the Whig, was a very remarkable writer. He may be compared to his contemporary, Dr. Fox, whom he resembled in many points. He is another instance of King William's discrimination, which was so superior to that of any of his ministers. Johnson was one of the most formidable of the advocates for the Exclusion Bill; and he suffered by whipping and imprisonment under James accordingly. Like Asgill, he argues with great apparent candour and clearness till he gets his opponent within reach; and then comes a blow as from a sledge-hammer. I do not know where I could put my hand on a book containing so much sense and constitutional doctrine as this thin folio of Johnson's Works; and what party in this country would read so severe a lecture in it as our modern Whigs? A close reasoner and a good writer in general may be known by his pertinent use of connections. Read any page of Johnson, you cannot alter one conjunction without spoiling the sense; it is a linked chain throughout. In your modern books, for the most part, the sentences in a page have the same connection with each other that marbles have in a bag; they touch without adhering.

(4) We are too apt to indemnify ourselves for some characteristic excellence we are kind enough to concede to a great author by denying him everything else. Thus Donne and Cowley, by happening to possess more wit, and faculty of illustration, than other men, are supposed to have been incapable of nature or feeling: they are usually opposed to such writers as Shenstone and Parnell; whereas, in the very thickest of their conceits,—in the bewildering mazes of tropes and figures,—a warmth of soul and generous feeling shines through; the "sum" of which, "forty thousand" of those natural poets, as they are called, "with all their quantity," could not make up.

(5) I have in my possession a curious volume of Latin verses, which I believe to be unique. It is entitled, *Alexandri Fultoni*

Scoti Epigrammatorum libri quinque. It purports to be printed at Perth, and bears date 1769. By the appellation which the author gives himself in the preface, *hypodidasculus*, I suppose him to have been an usher at some school. It is no uncommon thing now-a-days for persons concerned in academies to affect a literary reputation in the way of their trade. The "master of a seminary for a limited number of pupils at Islington" lately put forth an edition of that scarce tract, "The Elegy in a Country Churchyard," (to use his own words,) with notes and head-lines! But to our author: These epigrams of Alexander Fulton, Scotchman, have little remarkable in them besides extreme dulness and insipidity; but there is one, which, by its being marshalled in the front of the volume, seems to have been the darling of its parent, and for its exquisite flatness, and the surprising strokes of an anachronism with which it is pointed, deserves to be rescued from oblivion. It is addressed, like many of the others, to a fair one:

AD MARIULAM SUAM AUTOR

Moverunt bella olim Helenæ decor atque venustas
Europen inter frugiferamque Asiam.
Tam bona, quam tu, tam prudens, sin illa fuisset,
Ad lites issent Africa et America!

Which, in humble imitation of mine author's peculiar poverty of style, I have ventured thus to render into English:

THE AUTHOR TO HIS MOGGY

For Love's illustrious cause, and Helen's charms,
All Europe and all Asia rushed to arms.
Had she with these thy polish'd sense combined,
All Afric and America had join'd!

The happy idea of an American war undertaken in the cause of beauty ought certainly to recommend the author's memory to the countrymen of Maddison and Jefferson; and the bold anticipation of the discovery of that continent in the time of the Trojan War is a flight beyond the Sybil's books.

(6) "We read the *Paradise Lost* as a task," says Dr. Johnson. Nay, rather as a celestial recreation, of which the dullard mind is not at all hours alike recipient. "Nobody ever wished it longer;"—nor the moon rounder, he might have added. Why, 'tis the perfectness and completeness of it, which makes us imagine that not a line could be added to it, or diminished from it, with advantage. Would we have a cubit added to the stature of the Medicean Venus? Do we wish her taller?

(7)

Lear. Who are you?
Mine eyes are none o' the best. I'll tell you straight.
Are you not Kent?
Kent. The same; your servant Kent.
Where is your servant Caius?
Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that;
He'd strike, and quickly too: he's dead and rotten.
Kent. No, my good Lord; I am the very man—
Lear. I'll see that straight—
Kent. That, from your first of difference and decay,
Have follow'd your sad steps.
Lear. You are welcome hither.
Albany. He knows not what he says; and vain it is
That we present us to him.
Edgar. Look up, my lord.
Kent. Vex not his ghost. O, let him pass! He hates him,
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

So ends "King Lear," the most stupendous of the Shakspearian dramas; and Kent, the noblest feature of the conceptions of his divine mind. This is the magnanimity of authorship, when a writer, having a topic presented to him, fruitful of beauties for common minds, waives his privilege, and trusts to the judicious few for understanding the reason of his abstinence. What a pudder would a common dramatist have raised here of a reconciliation scene, a perfect recognition, between the assumed Caius and his master!—to the suffusing of many fair eyes, and the moistening of cambric handkerchiefs. The old dying king partially catching at the truth, and immediately lapsing into obliviousness, with the high-minded carelessness of the other to have his services appreciated, as one that

——served not for gain,
Or follow'd out of form,

are among the most judicious, not to say heart-touching, strokes in Shakspeare.

Allied to this magnanimity it is, where the pith and point of an argument, the amplification of which might compromise the modesty of the speaker, is delivered briefly, and, as it were, *parenthetically*; as in those few but pregnant words, in which the man in the old "Nut-brown Maid" rather intimates than reveals his unsuspected high birth to the woman:

Now understand, to Westmorland,
Which is my heritage,
I will you bring, and with a ring,
By way of marriage,
I will you take, and Lady make.

Turn we to the version of it, ten times diluted, of dear Mat. Prior—in his own way unequalled, and a poet now-a-days too much neglected—"In me," quoth Henry, addressing the astounded Emma—with a flourish and an attitude, as we may conceive:

> In me behold the potent Edgar's heir,
> Illustrious Earl! him terrible in war,
> Let Loire confess.

And with a deal of skimble-skamble stuff, as Hotspur would term it, more, presents the Lady with a full and true enumeration of his Papa's rent-roll in the fat soil by Deva.

But of all parentheses, (not to quit the topic too suddenly,) commend me to that most significant one, at the commencement of the old popular ballad of Fair Rosamund:

> When good King Henry ruled this land,
> The second of that name,

Now mark—

> (Besides the Queen) he dearly loved
> A fair and comely dame.

There is great virtue in this *besides*.

(8) A laxity pervades the popular use of words. Parson W—— is not quite so continent as Diana, yet prettily dissembleth his frailty. Is Parson W—— therefore a *hypocrite*? I think *not*. Where the concealment of a vice is less pernicious than the bare-faced publication of it would be, no additional delinquency is incurred in the secrecy. Parson W—— is simply an immoral clergyman. But if Parson W—— were to be for ever haranguing on the opposite virtue—choosing for his perpetual text, in preference to all other pulpit topics, the remarkable resistance recorded in the 39th of Exodus—dwelling, moreover, and dilating upon it—then Parson W—— might be reasonably suspected of hypocrisy. But Parson W—— rarely diverteth into such line of argument, or toucheth it briefly. His ordinary topics are fetched from "obedience to the Powers that be"—"submission to the civil magistrate in all commands that are not absolutely unlawful"; on which he can delight to expatiate with equal fervour and sincerity. Again, to *despise* a person is properly to *look down* upon him with none, or the least possible emotion. But when Clementina, who has lately lost her lover, with bosom heaving, eyes flashing, and her whole frame in agitation, pronounces with a peculiar emphasis, that she "*despises* the fellow," depend upon it that he is not quite

so despicable in her eyes as she would have us imagine.—One more instance:—If we must naturalise that portentous phrase, *a truism*, it were well that we limited the use of it. Every commonplace or trite observation is not a truism. For example: A good name helps a man on in the world. This is nothing but a simple truth, however hackneyed. It has a distinct subject and predicate. But when the thing predicated is involved in the term of the subject, and so necessarily involved that by no possible conception they can be separated, then it becomes a truism; as to say, A good name is a proof of a man's estimation in the world. We seem to be saying something when we say nothing. I was describing to F—— some knavish tricks of a mutual friend of ours. "If he did so and so," was the reply, "he cannot be an honest man." Here was a genuine truism—truth upon truth—inference and proposition identical; or rather a dictionary definition usurping the place of an inference.

(9) It is the praise of Shakspeare, with reference to the play-writers, his contemporaries, that he has so few revolting characters. Yet he has one that is singularly mean and disagreeable—the King in "Hamlet." Neither has he characters of insignificance, unless the phantom that stalks over the stage as Julius Cæsar, in the play of that name, may be accounted one. Neither has he envious characters, excepting the short part of Don John, in "Much Ado about Nothing." Neither has he unentertaining characters, if we except Parolles, and the little that there is of the Clown, in "All's Well that Ends Well."

(10) It would settle the dispute, as to whether Shakspeare intended Othello for a jealous character, to consider how differently we are affected towards him, and for Leontes in the "Winter's Tale." Leontes *is* that character. Othello's fault was simply credulity.

(11) Is it possible that Shakspeare should never have read Homer, in Chapman's version at least? If he had read it, could he mean to *travesty* it in the parts of those big boobies, Ajax and Achilles? Ulysses, Nestor, and Agamemnon, are true to their parts in the Iliad: they are gentlemen at least. Thersites, though unamusing, is fairly deducible from it. Troilus and Cressida are a fine graft upon it. But those two big bulks—

(12) There is something to me repugnant at any time in written hand. The text never seems determinate. Print

settles it. I had thought of the Lycidas as of a full-grown beauty—as springing up with all its parts absolute—till, in an evil hour, I was shown the original written copy of it, together with the other minor poems of its author, in the Library of Trinity, kept like some treasure to be proud of. I wish they had thrown them in the Cam, or sent them after the latter cantos of Spenser into the Irish Channel. How it staggered me to see the fine things in thin ore! interlined, corrected! as if their words were mortal, alterable, displaceable, at pleasure! as if they might have been otherwise and just as good! as if inspiration were made up of parts, and those fluctuating, successive, indifferent! I will never go into the workshop of any great artist again, nor desire a sight of his picture till it is fairly off the easel. No, not if Raphael were to be alive again, and painting another Galatea.

(13) D. commenced life after a course of hard study in the house of "pure Emanuel" as usher to a knavish fanatic schoolmaster at * * *, at a salary of eight pounds per annum, with board and lodging. Of this poor stipend he never received above half in all the laborious years he served this man. He tells a pleasant anecdote, that when poverty, staring out at his ragged knees, has sometimes compelled him against the modesty of his nature, to hint at arrears, Dr. * * * would take no immediate notice, but after supper, when the school was called together to evensong, he would never fail to introduce some instructive homily against riches and the corruption of the heart occasioned thro' the desire of them; ending with, "Lord, keep thy servants above all things from the heinous sin of avarice. Having food and raiment, let us therewithal be content. Give me Agar's wish," and the like; which to the little auditory sounded like a doctrine full of Christian prudence and simplicity, but to poor D. was a receipt in full for that quarter's demand at least. And D. has been under-working for himself ever since: drudging at low rates for unappreciating booksellers; wasting his fine erudition in silent corrections of the Classics and in those unostentatious but solid services to learning, which commonly fall to the lot of laborious scholars who have not the heart to sell themselves to the best advantage. He has published poems which do not sell, because their character is unobtrusive like his own, and because he has been too much absorbed in ancient literature to know what the popular mark in poetry is, even if he could have hit it. And, therefore,

his verses are properly what he terms them, *crotchets*; voluntaries, odes to liberty, and spring effusions, little tributes and offerings left behind him upon tables and window-seats at parting from friends' houses, and from all the inns of hospitality where he has been courteously (or but tolerably) received in his pilgrimage. If his muse of kindness halt a little behind the strong lines in fashion in this excitement-loving age, his prose is the best of the sort in the world, and exhibits a faithful transcript of his own healthy, natural mind, and cheerful, innocent tone of conversation.

(14) The beard of Gray's Bard, "streaming like a meteor," had always struck me as an injudicious imitation of the Satanic ensign in the Paradise Lost, which

> full high advanced,
> Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind:

till the other day I met with a passage in Heywood's old play, The Four Prentices of London, which it is difficult to imagine not to be the origin of the similitude in both poets. The line in Italics Gray has almost verbatim adopted—

> In Sion towers hangs his victorious flag,
> Blowing defiance this way; and it shows
> *Like a red meteor in the troubled air*,
> Or like a blazing comet that foretells
> The fall of princes.

All here is noble, and as it should be. The comparison enlarges the thing compared without stretching it upon a violent rack, till it bursts with ridiculous explosion. The application of such gorgeous imagery to an old man's beard is of a piece with the Bardolfian bombast: "see you these meteors, these exhalations?" or the raptures of an Oriental lover, who should compare his mistress's nose to a watch-tower or a steeple. The presageful nature of the meteor, which makes so fine an adjunct of the simile in Heywood, Milton has judiciously omitted, as less proper to his purpose; but he seems not to have overlooked the beauty of it, by his introducing the superstition in a succeeding book—

> like a comet burn'd,
> That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge,
> In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
> Shakes pestilence and war.

Gunpowder Plot

(15) Some days before the fatal stroke should be given, Master Keys [a conspirator] being at Tichmersh, in Northamptonshire, at the house of Mr. Gilbert Pickering, his brother-in-law, (but of a different

religion, as a true Protestant) suddenly whipped out his sword, and in merriment made many offers therewith at the heads, necks, and sides, of many gentlemen and gentlewomen then in the company. This then was taken as a mere frolic, and for the present passed accordingly; but afterwards, when the treason was discovered, such as remembered his gestures, thought thereby he did act what he intended to do (if the plot had took effect), hack and hew, kill and slay, all eminent persons of a different religion from themselves. —FULLER'S *Church History*.

Burning of Heretics

Indeed such burning of heretics much startled common people, pitying all in pain, and prone to asperse justice itself with cruelty, because of the novelty and hideousness of the punishment. And the purblind eyes of vulgar judgments looked only at what was next to them (the suffering itself) which they beheld with compassion, not minding the demerit of the guilt which deserved the same. Besides, such being unable to distinguish betwixt constancy and obstinacy, were ready to entertain good thoughts even of the opinions of those heretics, who sealed them so manfully with their blood. Wherefore King James [the first] politickly preferred, that heretics hereafter, thus condemned should silently and privately waste themselves away in the prison, rather than to grace them, and amuse others, with the solemnity of a public execution, which in popular judgments usurped the honour of a persecution.—FULLER'S *Church History*.

Positively one is at a loss which to admire most in this passage; the tender mercies of the King, or the regretful look which this old Divine seems to have cast back upon the extinguished fires of Smithfield. Through all the coyness of the confession, and the little more than hints which he broaches on this delicate subject, it is easy to discover, that those smothered brands had left as strong a relish and savor of fire in his nostrils, as the odour of the old fleshpots did upon the palates of the rebellious manna-sick Jews. He would fain be blowing up the dead coals again, though he offers at it reluctantly, and lights the pyre (as the ancients did in their funeral rites) with averted eyes. Yet Fuller appears to have been a humane kind-hearted man (where heretics were not concerned); and could see the enormity of "hacking and hewing," "killing and slaying" persons of an "opposite faith," when that faith was his own.

(16) Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire,
Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to ecstacy the living lyre.

Gray's Elegy.

There has always appeared to me a vicious mixture of the figurative with the real in this admired passage. The first two lines may barely pass, as not bad. But the *hands* laid in the earth, must mean the identical five-finger'd organs of the body; and how does this consist with their occupation of *swaying rods*, unless their owner had been a schoolmaster; or *waking lyres*, unless he were literally a harper by profession? Hands that "might have held the plough," would have some sense, for that work is strictly manual; the others only emblematically or pictorially so. Kings now-a-days sway no rods, *alias* sceptres, except on their coronation day; and poets do not necessarily strum upon the harp or fiddle, as poets. When we think upon dead cold fingers, we may remember the honest squeeze of friendship which they returned heretofore; we cannot but with violence connect their living ideas, as opposed to death, with uses to which they must become metaphorical (*i.e.* less real than dead things themselves) before we can so with any propriety apply them.

(17) He saw, but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night. *Gray's Bard.*

Nothing was ever more violently distorted, than this material fact of Milton's blindness having been occasioned by his intemperate studies, and late hours, during his prosecution of the defence against Salmasius—applied to the dazzling effects of too much mental vision. His corporal sight was blasted with corporal occupation; his inward sight was not impaired, but rather strengthened, by his task. If his course of studies had turned his brain, there would have been some fitness in the expression.

(18) And since I cannot, I will prove a *villain*,
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
Soliloquy in Richard III.

The performers, whom I have seen in this part, seem to mistake the import of the word which I have marked with italics. Richard does not mean, that because he is by shape and temper unfitted for a *courtier*, he is therefore determined to prove, in our sense of the word, a *wicked man*. The word in Shakspeare's time had not passed entirely into the modern sense; it was in its passage certainly, and indifferently used as such; the beauty of a world of words in that age was in their being less definite than they are now, fixed, and petrified. *Villain* is here undoubtedly used for a *churl*, or *clown*, opposed to a *courtier*; and the incipient deterioration of the meaning

gave the use of it in this place great spirit and beauty. A *wicked man* does not necessarily hate courtly pleasures; a *clown* is naturally opposed to them. The mistake of this meaning has, I think, led the players into that hard literal conception with which they deliver this passage, quite foreign, in my understanding, to the bold gay-faced irony of the soliloquy. Richard, upon the stage, looks round, as if he were literally apprehensive of some dog snapping at him; and announces his determination of procuring a looking-glass, and employing a tailor, as if he were prepared to put both in practice before he should get home—I apprehend "a world of figures here."

(19) Milton takes his rank in English literature, according to the station which has been determined on by the critics. But he is not read like Lord Byron, or Mr. Thomas Moore. He is not *popular*; nor perhaps will he ever be. He is known as the Author of "Paradise Lost"; but his "Paradise Regained," "severe and beautiful," is little known. Who knows his Arcades? or Samson Agonistes? or half his minor poems? We are persuaded that, however they may be spoken of with respect, few persons take the trouble to read them. Even Comus, the child of his youth, his "florid son, young" Comus—is not well known; and for the little renown he may possess, he is indebted to the stage. The following lines (*excepting only the first four*) are not printed in the common editions of Milton; nor are they generally known to belong to that divine "Masque"; yet they are in the poet's highest style. We are happy to bring them before such of our readers as are not possessed of Mr. Todd's expensive edition of Milton.

The Spirit enters.

Before the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aërial spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Amidst th' Hesperian gardens, on whose banks
Bedew'd with nectar and celestial songs,
Eternal roses grow, and hyacinth,
And fruits of golden rind, on whose fair tree
The scaly harness'd dragon ever keeps
His unenchanted eye: around the verge
And sacred limits of this blissful isle,
The jealous ocean, that old river, winds
His far-extended arms, till with steep fall
Half his waste flood the wild Atlantic fills,
And half the slow unfathom'd Stygian pool.
But soft, I was not sent to court your wonder
With distant worlds, and strange removed climes,
Yet thence I come, and oft from thence behold, etc.

Our readers will forgive us for having modernised the spelling. It is the only liberty that we have taken with our great author's magnificent passage.

(20) A profusion of verbal dainties, with a disproportionate lack of matter and circumstance, is, I think, one reason of the coldness with which the public has received the poetry of a nobleman now living; which, upon the score of exquisite diction alone, is entitled to something better than neglect. I will venture to copy one of his Sonnets in this place, which for quiet sweetness, and unaffected morality, has scarcely its parallel in our language.

TO A BIRD THAT HAUNTED THE WATERS OF LACKEN IN THE WINTER

By Lord Thurlow

O melancholy Bird!—a winter's day
Thou standest by the margin of the pool,
And, taught by God, dost thy whole being school
To Patience, which all evil can allay;
God has appointed thee the Fish thy prey;
And given thyself a lesson to the Fool
Unthrifty, to submit to moral rule,
And his unthinking course by thee to weigh.
There need not schools, nor the Professor's chair,
Though these be good, true wisdom to impart.
He who has not enough, for these, to spare
Of time, or gold, may yet amend his heart,
And teach his soul, by brooks, and rivers fair;
Nature is always wise in every part.

(21) *Observations on a Dry Book*

Mr. Indicator,—What! and do you really mean to say that this, at page 62, No. 60, is "a specimen of a joke run down"? For "run down," read "wound up." There are limits to human wisdom, but none to folly. Hercules might come to a stand-still, but our merry friend with the bauble was never heard to exclaim ne plus ultra. After reading your pleasant article in our coterie the other evening, we took down "the book" you allude to, (it gets into most libraries of any size,) and it quickly inspired us with the following dry jokes:

A. Et certamen erat, Corydon cum Thyrside, magnum,—Posthabui—seria ludo. Allons. I know an infant who, on merely seeing it, was cured of water in the head.

B. A dropsical gentleman given over by his physicians was never tapped again, after he had read it.

A. Carry a copy under your arm, and you need no umbrella.

B. A number were sent over to Ireland, just at the time they had almost abandoned the idea of reclaiming bogs.

C. A friend of mine on the coast has recovered ninety acres of land from the sea, by possessing a copy. He calls it his Copyhold land.

A. Southey tells me, that Kehama had one in his pocket when he walked into the ocean, and it divided.

B. When I travel, I always take it to read in bed, and though I never use a warming pan, I never had the rheumatism in my life.

A. It must be a very ancient work, for we owe to it the origin of the terms "dry study," "dry reading," etc.

C. It is not generally known, but the conjuror rubs himself with it, before he dips his arm in boiling water.

B. Some one swearing, kissed it in jest, which brought on the complaint of parched lips. Feeling this, he threw it down, and trampling on it, was laid up with chilblains.

C. It is an excellent substitute in bathing for an oil-skin cap.

A. It is said to be very superior in efficacy to a devil'd biscuit.

D. It is found in most libraries, which occasions such an accumulation of dust in those places.

B. A nurse, who took it up by accident, was obliged to wean the child directly.

D. A widow that I know, after burying her husband, retired to her closet, and having read a page, never shed another tear. This may be considered its greatest miracle!

C. Its author, who is said to have run mad during the dog-days, wrote it on the sands of Africa, from whence it was brought to this quarter of the globe by means of the Sirocco. "Nil dictum, quod non dictum prius," is, as you now see, a mighty foolish maxim; and, as a foolish bit of Latin makes a very appropriate conclusion to the English that precedes it,

"*Vivas in amore jocisque—*
Vive vale.[1]"

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[1] Live and preserve your health for other folks,
And don't forget to love, and crack your jokes.

FRAGMENTS OF CRITICISM: II

Minute of Suggestions re "*Antonio,*" *sent to William Godwin*

Queries. Whether the best conclusion would not be a solemn judicial pleading, appointed by the king, before himself in person of Antonio as proxy for Roderigo, and Guzman for himself—the forms and ordering of it to be highly solemn and grand. For this purpose, (allowing it,) the king must be reserved and not have committed his royal dignity by descending to previous conference with Antonio, but must refer from the beginning to this settlement. He must sit in dignity as a high royal arbiter. Whether this would admit of spiritual interpositions, cardinals, etc.—appeals to the Pope, and haughty rejection of his interposition by Antonio—(this merely by the way).

The pleadings must be conducted by short speeches—replies, taunts, and bitter recriminations by Antonio, in his rough style. In the midst of the undecided cause, may not a messenger break up the proceedings by an account of Roderigo's death (no improbable or far-fetch'd event), and the whole conclude with an affecting and awful invocation of Antonio upon Roderigo's spirit, now no longer dependent upon earthly tribunals or a froward woman's will, etc., etc.

"Almanza's daughter is now free," etc.

This might be made *very affecting.* Better nothing follow after; if anything, she must step forward and resolve to take the veil. In this case, the whole story of the former nunnery *must* be omitted. But, I think, better leave the final conclusion to the imagination of the spectator. Probably the violence of confining her in a convent is not necessary; Antonio's own castle would be sufficient.

To relieve the former part of the Play, could not some sensible images, some work for the Eye, be introduced? A gallery of Pictures, Almanza's ancestors, to which Antonio might affectingly point his sister, one by one, with anecdote, etc.

At all events, with the present want of action, the Play must not extend above four Acts, unless it is quite new modell'd. The proposed alterations might all be effected in a few weeks.

Solemn judicial pleadings always go off well, as in Henry the Eighth, Merchant of Venice, and, perhaps, Othello.

FRAGMENTS OF CRITICISM: III

Remarks on a Friend's MS.

Page 1. "Palace and its *Purlieus*" = pleasures, or precincts.

Page 3. Besides the words "riant" and "Euphrosyne," the sentence is senseless: a sweet sadness capable of inspiring a more *grave joy* than what? than demonstrations of *mirth*. Odd if had not been. I had once a wry *Aunt*, which may make me dislike the phrase. "Purlieus" again; and "etiquette"= form which attends it in Court.

Page 5. "Pleasureable" (no word good that is awkward to spell) = welcome or joyous. "Too pleased" = too well pleased. *Dele* "The sun."

Page 6. "Bits of tales" = fragments.

Page 7. "Selfishness" = self-love.

Page 11. "Evadne is not such a one," delete: "gentleness" = compliance. "Proud eyes" occurs again in a page or two: alter it here.

Page 13. "More deeply than they, etc., can compass," hardly English—and the oath is of more depth, etc. Last 11 lines, "*words*" three times repeated: *speech* or *sayings*.

Page 14. "*Coyish* jesting" = coyness in jest; jesting coyness; over-acted niceness. "Hear me and be patient"—to come nearer to "be so" in next page.

Pages 17, 18. "Images," four times repeated in few lines.

Page 23. "Blinded his sight to all beauty."

Page 32. "Think who it is"; not, "of whom it is."

Page 33. "His friendship was as a thing that had never been": obscure.

Page 34. 4th line: rub out the dog and his execution. "*Steady self-possession* more than *undaunted courage*"—the two things not opposed enough; you mean, rather than any rash fire of valour in action had gain'd, etc. "Furnish forth" = direct.

Page 35. Leave out "*and*" and "*union*"; "and *which*" always requires a foregoing "which."

Page 38. "Senseless votarists": *delete*. "Looking like a heifer," I fear won't do in prose: "like to some spotless heifer," or, "that you might have compared her to some spotless heifer, etc."; or "like to some sacrificial heifer of old." I should prefer

"garlanded with flowers as for a sacrifice": and cut the cow altogether.

Page 42. "Like the muttering of some strange spell." Omit "demon"; they are subject to spells, they don't use them.

Page 43. "Feud" here (and before and after) is wrong; "old malice" or "indifference." *Feud* is of clans. It might be applied to family quarrels, but quite improperly to individual fallings out. Leave out "with a beseeching gesture." "Was about to stammer out something between rage and weeping *when* the King, etc."

Page 45. "Lusts" = guilty desires. "Lust," too, in the page before better altered. It is not a readable-out word for or to young ladies. 'Twas quite an innocent monosyllable in Fletcher's days. 'Tis a tragedy word still, but not for a narrator in a modern drawing-room. Omit "or felt as if they should ever need to press it again." The King certainly did not mean *not to sleep* after a proper time. 'Tis flat to confound his *not thinking of sleeping* with their sleep-absolutely-forbidding cares. Cut the Tiger. The King is staled to his sinning. 'Tis no new rage.

Page 46. 2nd paragraph. You have anticipated Evadne's consent in the dialogue of Melantius and Diphilus. You must only here speak of M.'s confirming her in it.

Page 47. Rather too much of Amintor's delight in sun-risings, etc. I would say, "As he was gazing with pleasure at the streaks, etc. . . . he was arrested by a voice, which like a galley slave that for a moment had forgot his condition, reduced him to the irksome reality of it." That former scene by the sea-shore is rather faulty; 'tis modern and wanting distinctness. Besides, you don't say *how* he moralised the waves, etc., but that he *did* it. Vision passed away "from his senses" a clog of words.

NOTES

NOTES

ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

An Appeal from the Shades

(*London Magazine*, August 1826)

This piece is of questionable authorship, but it has so much the appearance of being by Lamb that I think it must take its place among his works until the presumptions in its favour have been disposed of by further research or closer criticism. The arguments against it are mainly these: (1) That it is an unsigned article, of undeniable power, to which, nevertheless, no reference is made in the letters of the time: (2) That it appeared in the *London* at a time when, as we have been in the habit of thinking, Lamb had ceased all connection with that magazine. But the connection supposing it to have entirely ceased, had ceased only for about a year, and in the interval his attempt to work in another quarter (*The New Monthly Magazine*) had ended by the month of June, in some degree of disappointment, if not of rather vivid annoyance and chagrin: so that if he wrote, or took from its drawer, an article like this in the summer of 1826, he would not know where to place it save in the old pages—towards which these said disappointments may have made him feel a revived kindness. And of course the article, from its very nature, could not be signed; not to mention that he had by this time something like an aversion to the signature "Elia." As to the arguments in favour, they are external and internal. The reader will find, without being directed to them, many passages which hardly permit one to entertain a doubt as to the hand that wrote them: albeit there were some cunning hands at work at that time, whose chief skill and pride was in a masterly simulation of well-known models. But here an important fact has to be noted, which has been overlooked by Mr. Dobell, by whom this article was first reprinted (in *Sidelights on Charles Lamb*)—namely, it is very curious that the simulator, granting that we have here an effort in simulation, should have produced an article having such strong internal marks of belonging to a period "twenty-three years earlier" than the date of publication: the very period which the external evidence assigns as "the date of composition." For that external evidence consists in a letter to Rickman on 16 July, 1803, which runs thus:

"Dear Rickman,—I enclose you a wonder, a letter from the Shades. A dead man wants to return, and be enrolled *inter vivos*. 'Tis a gentle ghost, and in this galvanic age it may have a chance."

Now what strikes one greatly on reading this article is a certain kinship with *Rosamund Gray*—an underlying similarity of feeling, an occasional identity of topic, which might be traced in some detail. There is a great advance, to be sure, in power, in maturity of style. But that is accounted for when we remember that 1803 marks about the end of what I have spoken of[1] as "those wonderful Chapel-street and early Temple days: the greatest period of all in his mental life-history, if we could only trace the record of it." Five years of that most educative letter-writing of his; five years of reading and of successive literary initiations; five years, some part of which was marked by a habit of sedulous imitation, by avowed exercises in the literary styles of other men. How he could prosper in that kind of attempt, let the "Curious Fragments" say: and as Burton was then his model, so here there are traces of the influence of Sir

[1] "Specimens of the Dramatic Poets," vol. ix. of the Macdonald edition, p. xxxi.

Thomas Browne. But after all, what is basic in the thing seems to me the "feeling," the obsession almost, of *Rosamund Gray*. In that story we seem aware of references to some evil-doer other than Matravis: who was it? There is the same obsession here, large and vague, though the reference to the crime of old Dorrel might indeed be said to be explicit enough, bating the romantic circumstance of the white horse. For him, see "Epicedium" and Note thereon, in *Poems and Plays*. When Matravis, in his last moments, talks "of 'charnel-houses' and 'dead' men, and "whether they 'knew anything that passes in their coffins'"—we have a suggestion which meets us again here: "These after-relishes of life—these holiday furloughs the kind Death allows us—and they serve to sweeten 'some darker passages in our coffin-dreams.'" Not to prolong the Note nor to force the argument, I think Lamb wrote this article and sent it to Rickman in 1803, just as he wrote "The Londoner," and sent it to Manning in 1802: that shortly thereafter it may—but more probably may not —have appeared in some newspaper or ephemeral magazine unknown to us: that he kept it by him, in print or manuscript, as he kept "The Londoner" and some other things, for a world of years: and that he drew it forth at the end of time and was too interested in it not to desire to see it in print, albeit there were reasons why it could not bear his old signature, and even reasons why he may not have cared to acknowledge it in a final way. Note that it could not well go into a volume of Essays, in the ordinary acceptation of the term: and a volume of *Fantasies*, as we would call them now, he never lived to produce. All of which of course is special pleading and means that I wish the reader to hold me justified in deciding not to exclude a highly probable article which may, for all that, have to be excluded by future editors.

The Londoner

(*Works*, 1818)

It was necessary that upon this immense and multitudinous topic there should be a plurality of great and impetuous deliverances, that the glories of London should be blazoned on many banners—at any rate, on no subject has Lamb, whose Essays are often a variant of some passage in his letters, written so many variants, and those so uniformly full-hearted, as upon this. He must have rejoiced that he had amongst his friends a studious Cambridge mathematician, like Manning—an austere Poet of the mountains and the solitary places, like Wordsworth—a somewhat impossibly earnest and good young man of the provinces, like Robert Lloyd — if only for the opportunities thus given him of sending forth the praises of London, and of all crowded, common, human places, as a note of defiance—humorous defiance—as well as a confession of rapture and a boast. At any rate, it is in letters to these unlikely correspondents—all written in the winter of 1800–1—that the variants upon this Essay are found. Although it was classed in the *Works* along with the "Letters under assumed Signatures, Published in the *Reflector*," it had not appeared in that magazine, but had seen the light earlier in the *Morning Post* of 1 February, 1802. There was nothing to hinder the readers of that newspaper from believing that the author of this contribution was born on Lord Mayor's Day, as he says; but "we" through an inconvenient excess of knowledge, could not believe it if we tried.

The Inconveniences Resulting from Being Hanged

(*Reflector*, 1811: *Works*, 1818)

The subject fascinated Lamb, and we may take it that he never thought of hanging as quite a physical act. It had for him a weirdness, a supernaturalism. The man who had been hanged had an attribute beyond his humanity: and to have been half hanged was to be an animate miracle, a living dead man. Lamb's comic regard for the "subject"—in all senses of the word—is but the recoil of a feeling that was, in its first phase, primitive, childlike, superstitious. He returns to it in *The Pawnbroker's Daughter*, where the same unfortunate circumstance in the past of one of the heroes is like to prove a bar to his matrimonial aspirations, until all is cleared up, and the honours made easy, by the discovery that the Desired One's fair fame was flecked by a kindred infamy. It is curiously

characteristic of Lamb that in this paper he gives Pensilis just his own tale of years in 1811, namely, "in the thirty-seventh year of my existence, Mr. Editor"!

On the Danger of Confounding Moral with Personal Deformity

(*Reflector*, 1811: *Works*, 1818)

Another of the topics on which Lamb was "curious." He returned to the subject of deformities, as we shall see, in 1826, and there are a good many allusions in the works, *passim*. Such advertisements as he here speaks of were common in England in the eighteenth century, and perhaps more common in America before the Revolution, owing to the institution of bound-labour which prevailed then, by which a poor man, newly arrived in the country, would constitute himself the chattel of an employer for a term of years, and was apt, if he stayed away, to be advertised for like a lost dog or an escaped felon.

On the Ambiguities arising from Proper Names

(*Reflector*, No. iii., 1811)

What Lamb would have called one of his "briskets and veiny pieces." He tells the story in a letter to Wordsworth, 1 February, 1806; but seemingly did not think it worth telling again in the *Works*. The poet named Spencer was the author of the ballad *Beth Gellert*"—more usually entitled *The Death of Gellert*—which appears still, I think, in the school-books. It did in mine; and I remember once rummaging all the leaves of a Spenser (Edmund) to see if I could find it "at home."

On Burial Societies

(*Reflector*, 1811: *Works*, 1818)

Of all these *Reflector* papers, this one, I think, is most worthy to have had a place assigned it among the very richest and most relishful of Elia's Essays. It has the look of not having just been written to meet the journalistic occasion, and one cannot doubt, at any rate, that the "Character of an Undertaker" was a work of earlier, and quite unhurried, composition.

"If Cæsar were chiefly anxious . . . how he might die most decently": an allusion to the fact that Cæsar, when sinking beneath the daggers of his assailants, gathered his robe about him and muffled his face with his mantle, that there might be no disarray nor physical indignity in his fall, and that he might not present to lookers-on the ghastly and disordered visage of a man who had died meanly struggling to preserve his life. The spirit at once of policy and sublimity expressed in the act has been commented upon by all the historians, and seems to have impressed Shakespeare.

> "Then burst his mighty heart;
> And in his mantle muffling up his face,
> Even at the base of Pompey's statue,
> Which all the while ran blood, great Cæsar fell."

Edax on Appetite

(*Reflector*, 1811: *Works*, 1818)

The scattered indications of Lamb's interest *in re culinaria* are worthy of a separate treatise, if only a connoisseur could be found in all ways worthy to undertake it. It goes through all his works, beginning in *Rosamund Gray* (where "I ordered my dinner—green peas and sweetbread—it had been a favourite dish with me in my childhood—I was allowed to have it on my birthdays") and ending in certain paragraphs of "Table Talk by the Late Elia," which appeared in the *Athenæum*. As one would infer, he was in reality one of the smallest of eaters. We shall find him referring again to this paper. Edax's expedient, of daily "going the round of all my friends," was too human and rational not to have been anticipated by somebody else. I find in the *Almanach des Gourmands* (troisième année, seconde édition, 1806) the story of a French Edax who discovered

betimes that he was wasting his life by living in a provincial town, where all the world had one and the same dinner hour. He conveyed himself to Paris, where there is, or was, a different dinner hour for every social sphere and every civic district; and he extended his friendship and timed his visits so wisely, that for the rest of his life he counted that a rare and disastrous day—a kind of alimentary Sedan—when he dined but twice.

"Hospita on the Immoderate Indulgence of the Pleasures of the Palate" followed immediately upon the confession of Edax in the same number of the *Reflector*, and had annexed to it this editorial Note:

"To all appearance, the obnoxious visitor of Hospita can be no other than my inordinate friend Edax, whose misfortunes are detailed, *ore rotundo*, in the preceding article. He will of course see the complaint that is made against him; but it can hardly be any benefit either to himself or his entertainers. The man's appetite is not a bad habit, but a disease; and if he had not thought proper to relate his own story, I do not know whether it would have been altogether justifiable to be so amusing upon such a subject."

The Good Clerk

(*Reflector*, No. iv., 1812)

This was not reprinted in the *Works*; possibly because he did not care to include two pieces (this and the Fuller paper) consisting so largely of extracts; but more probably because this sarcasm upon the morals and imagination of the mercantile and trading classes would not have been quite in its right place among the Collected Works of Mr. Charles Lamb of the India House. And it is difficult to suppose that Lamb had any doubt as to Defoe's meaning, though it is certainly the fate of the best satire to be taken in its serious, obvious, impossible sense. I know this, because some efforts of my own in that kind have been most unbelievably mistaken: a few appropriate remarks, for instance, quite magnanimously good-humoured, on the Essay "Imperfect Sympathies" having been in more than one quarter cited in support of a printed allegation that this editor was a creature of extraordinary and idiotic seriousness and fatuity —which, when all is said, is absurd.

Recollections of Christ's Hospital

(*Gentleman's Magazine*, June 1813: *Works*, 1818)

This Essay has the distinction of beginning with the worst sentence which Charles Lamb, or any English writer of repute, was ever willing to have perpetuated as it came from his pen. Its turgidity is partly accounted for by the fact that it was not really the first sentence of the Essay "at first," but a sort of cumulative convincing sentence in which he gathered up and massed in one orotund utterance the argument he had been working towards in what went before. For this paper began, originally, with a reference to a controversy, then much in the air, as to the custom, alleged to be quite established, a notorious and prevalent scandal, of admitting to Christ's Hospital the sons of wealthy fathers, or fathers well-to-do enough not to need to be relieved from the burden of educating their offspring. Some parties to the controversy, going back to the letter of the charter, or foundation-deed, argued that the Hospital was intended for the education of children drawn entirely from the poorer or "working" classes. Others argued that the passage of time, and the social changes it had brought about, must be taken into account; and claimed that the Hospital would do most good, and most nearly fulfil the spirit of its founder's intention, if it were recognised rather as an institution for the education of the sons of poor or heavily-burdened folk of what would be called the better, the gentle, the educated or refined classes. This is the side that Lamb took, and perhaps this passage is the only one in which one suspects him of being just a little smug. He struck out the opening passages when he reprinted the Essay in 1818, and also struck out the concluding and completing part of the second paragraph (as the Essay now stands), which remains consequently an illogical sentence. The words omitted were these: "let those judge, I say, who have compared this scene with the abject countenances, the squalid mirth, the broken-down spirit, and crouching, or fierce and brutal deportment to

strangers, of the very different sets of little beings who range round the precincts of common orphan schools and places of charity." After reading which murky piece of unreality, to call it by no harder name, one is ever so glad that our future Elia was not drawn into any kind of permanent connection with Sylvanus Urban. Lamb made amends later when, in the *London Magazine* for November 1820, he wrote that Essay on "Christ's Hospital Five-and-Thirty Years Ago," which is full of all that is truest and tenderest and of widest and wisest sympathy with young life, without respect to caste or kind, in all the works of Elia. But indeed this Essay, after its forced and factitious opening has been got over, contains some of his best writing and his wisest thinking. I do not know that any one has put the moral argument in favour of education away from home, the Public School system (that anti-mammalian institution, as a profound contemporary thinker calls it), so firmly and winningly as he puts it here. For references to our sources of information regarding Christ's Hospital as it was in Lamb's day, see vol. i. of this edition, p. 299.

On the Melancholy of Tailors

(*Champion*, 4 December, 1814: *Works*, 1818)

This paper seems to have been made the subject of criticism by Wordsworth, for in a letter to him dated 1814 (and probably written in November), Lamb says that the difference evident in Wordsworth's experience of tailors and Burton's (i.e. C. L.'s) may be due to the fact that Burton had "confined his observations to the genuine native London tailor," and therefore could not pretend to give account of "what freaks tailor-nature may take in the country." But he still held to his main points; as, for instance, that a tailor who had enough animation to laugh aloud must certainly be in an unnatural state (for a tailor), demoniac, inhabited by a devil! Canon Ainger has an admirable Note on this Essay, from which I will purloin two sentences: "The title and the signature of this Essay declare the source of its inspiration. *It is likely enough that the mention by the original Burton of* cabbage *as a 'melancholy' diet suggested the whole paper.*" The italics are mine, and I think the excellence of the remark entitles it to that emphasis. The Canon also quotes here from *Satan in Search of a Wife*:

> Who is she that by night from her balcony looks
> On a garden where cabbage is springing?
> 'Tis the tailor's fair lass!

On Needlework

(*The British Lady's Magazine and Monthly Miscellany*, 1 April, 1815)

To this paper by Mary Lamb attention was first directed by a passage in Crabb Robinson's Diary, and the paper was sought out and reprinted by the late Mrs. Gilchrist in her Life of Mary Lamb. It is interesting in many ways, not the least being the way in which the writer has anticipated the modern theory of Economy, which regards Thrift as the most questionable of all the virtues, whether from a social or a personal point of view. Even now, however, there are many educated persons to whom it will seem paradoxical to maintain that a penny saved is not a penny gained. Mary's reference to the days when she "exercised her needle for a livelihood" takes us back to the strained conditions from which the tragedy of 1796 resulted (see *Memoir*, pp. xxii. to xxv.), and we are reminded that, in the newspapers of the time, the unhappy daughter who had been the instrument of her own mother's death was described as a "mantua-maker." For a further word on Needle-work, see "Mrs. B." farther on in this volume.

A True Story

(*Indicator*, 12 July, 1820: *The Talisman*)

When I came upon this in the *Indicator* and decided that it was by Lamb, I was not aware that it had been elsewhere printed. It was signed with a Delta, and one had to judge by internal evidence alone. Taken along with something in the note of the thing, however, which seemed to

preclude the idea of any other authorship, there was one little touch which might rank as an indication if not as evidence, namely, there had appeared in the previous number of the *Indicator*, under the heading "To Correspondents," this one line: "'A True Story' will be inserted with pleasure." It seemed very odd indeed that an editor should put in an announcement like that about a contribution that was already marked to appear "in our next"—but it was just the sort of thing that Leigh Hunt would be likely to do if the said contribution was by Charles Lamb, whom he lost no possible opportunity of magnifying charmingly and making much of with an Italian largesse of courtesy. Later I found it in *The Talisman* given as "by Charles Lamb," and Mr. Lucas says he has seen it among the Lamb papers of the late Alexander Ireland, in the Manchester Free Library. Nevertheless a critic in a supremely well-informed quarter obelused this *trouvaille*, in reviewing Mr. Lucas's volume, as not being by Lamb. But I fancy the critic in question had fallen into a momentary confusion of thought, and was identifying this Lamb contribution to *The Talisman*, which is authentic, with a Lamb contribution to *The Gem*, which, despit the signature, is by Thomas Hood. They played many little pranks like that, those honest fellows of the *London*: stealing at will, or at need, each other's notions, initials, and even each other's full names. Sometimes they would steal both the notion and the name, with the effect that theft and restitution were a single act. It is probable that this little story was a work of much earlier date than its date of publication. It connects itself with our reminiscences of Blakesware, and of the early Poems, and of *Rosamund Gray*, but has affinities also with "Dream-Children."

Holiday Children

(*Indicator*, 3 January, 1821)

At the end of 1820 Leigh Hunt was ill, and for a few weeks was fain to keep the *Indicator* going as best he could, by reprinting earlier articles of his own from the *Examiner*, and also articles by some of his contributors there, Lamb being one of these. To one of those invalid numbers of the *Indicator* Lamb contributed the extracts from Sir Thomas More and a jocular letter on the subject of a Dry Book (see vol. ii. of this edition, pp. 363–4). In the following number the editor had still to own himself thankful for outside help sent in, as his recovery was slower than he had anticipated: and the chief item acknowledged was "a seasonable article on Holiday Children." This has not hitherto been identified as Lamb's, but I fancy no one who reads it will have much doubt as to its authorship. It is, as to its feeling, a little in the *Indicator's* own vein, but it is not by the *Indicator*, we know, and beyond that it has unmistakable Elian touches, a good dozen of them.

Old Maids: Mrs. B.

(*Indicator*, 21 February, 1821)

I have little doubt that these two articles, which evidently belong together just as the "Edax" and the "Hospita" contributions to the *Reflector* did, both issued from Russell House, though I do not feel quite so assured that they are both from the same hand. They are each of them the subject of a preliminary announcement just as "A True Story" had been: that is to say, the editor bespoke his readers' attention for them before they appeared. With "Old Maids" the reader will do well to compare the Essay "Modern Gallantry" (vol. i. of this edition, p. 92); and for an explanation of the emphatic and hearty remark that "the most prying, scandal-loving and ill-tempered woman that I know, or ever did know, has been twice married" he may turn to every reference which Charles Lamb ever made to the second Mrs. Godwin, especially one in a letter to the Kennys written in 1816. "I suppose you know we've left the Temple *pro tempore*. By the way, this conduct has caused many strange surmises in a good lady of our acquaintance. She lately sent for a young gentleman of the India House, who lives opposite her at Monroe's the flute shop in Skinner Street, Snowhill—I mention no names: you shall never get out of me what lady I mean—on purpose to ask all he knew about me. I had previously introduced him to her whist table. Her enquiries embraced every possible thing that could be known of me—how I stood

in the India House, what was the amount of my salary, what it was likely to be hereafter, whether I was thought clever in business, why I had taken country lodgings, why at Kingsland in particular, had I friends in that road," and so on and so on; continuing thus: "was not there a gentleman of the name of Morgan, did he know him, did he come to see me, did he know how Mr. Morgan lived, "she" could never make out how they were maintained, was it true he lived out of the profits of a linen draper's shop in Bishopgate Street." . . . . But the catalogue of the lady's questions is too long, and the tendency of some of them would seem to have been almost too delicate, for transcription. Suffice it that Lamb has here "as good as named" the lady, Mrs. Godwin living at 41 Skinner Street. In judging of the authorship of this little article, which was a slight and improvised contribution, the reader must bear in mind its dramatic character—that in writing it Lamb had in mind the signature which it was to bear, "An Old Maid." It was preceded in the *Indicator* by the following queer editorial introduction:

"We must apologise to the writer of the following letter for not having taken earlier notice of it. We had hoped that we should speedily be able to introduce it with a longer preface than our slow recovery will allow us to give; but it need not wait for an introduction; nor would this work be exactly the place for it. The authoress (for unfortunately, the prejudices of which she speaks compel us to suppose the writer of the female sex) is evidently too well aware of all the ordinary points of the question, perhaps more; and to enter on others upon which the main one turns, would involve a consideration of all those selfish outrages done to the female sex, whether in dooming them to a life of celibacy or the other extreme, which require great nicety and preparation even in touching. So much sorer even than the misfortunes it creates, is false virtue sure to be, however it has bullied itself up into the place of true. One of the objects for which we hope to live and to have strength, is to endeavour, in a work by itself, to call the attention of society to the great question of sexual intercourse in general—we mean, to the actual amount of its happiness or misery, as gatherable from record and observation, to the prejudices which pollute it, and the principles on which, in our opinion, it ought to be regulated."

As I have said, "Mrs. B." is a complementary piece to the one preceding, and it may well have been written by Charles Lamb, though it does not seem to me altogether unlikely that Mary's hand held the pen on this occasion. Some words of blasphemy spoken against the Respectable British Female's grand idol of Needle-Work seem to favour that notion, besides a peculiarly feminine turn about the concluding sentence. Leigh Hunt's editorial note was this:

"We return our best thanks to our fair correspondent for her regard, and even to Mrs. B. for her dislike; only we wish for the latter's own sake, as well as her companion's, that she would look upon us with an eye of greater humanity. If Mrs. B. were to explode such things as 'Shakespeare, the fields, and music, and books,' she might as well explode Nature at once; which indeed, we are surprised, that some of these old ladies, female or male, do not propose to do. But as long as our fair correspondent understands these, and has one person that understands her, she may endure Mrs. B., C. and D. into the bargain."

Why the name "Mrs. B." was chosen, it is hard to say. It may either have been a side-glance at certain "Immeasurable B.'s" referred to in the correspondence (and hinted at in the Essays), or it may have been an Elian cross-trail, suggested by the fact that "Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist" had made its appearance in that month's *London Magazine*.

Finally, there is a curious editorial note in the preceding number of the *Indicator*, under Correspondence: "FRIEND R. N. need not be afraid of being obliged to become hostile to us. It is not in his nature to be so, we suspect, if he would; and we shall not give him occasion." Is it too far a cast of conjecture to suppose that "Friend R. N." was Randal Norris, and that his expostulation had something to do with the signature to this article, and with something in the article itself that had a domestic meaning? Lamb was very apt, while approaching some personal matters and foibles in a spirit of real respect and playful affection, not to realise quite how the literary result would be read by the persons whom he had "touched upon rather deeply" in George Dyer's phrase: George Dyer himself, for instance. "F. N.'s" contribution had not appeared; but it had been announced, with these initials, the week before.

Elia to his Correspondents

(*London Magazine*, March and November, 1821)

These delightful marginal works of Elia do not call for explanation. But the second rose out of the first, and the first rose out of a little paragraph in the *Indicator* (31 January, 1821) with which Leigh Hunt introduced an article of his own upon "The Works of Charles Lamb," this article having appeared earlier in the *Examiner*. The paragraph ran thus: "We repeat in our present number a criticism in the *Examiner* on the works of this author. He is not so much known as he is admired; but if to be admired, and more, by those who are better known, have anything of the old laudatory desideratum in it, we know no man who possesses a more enviable share of praise. The truth is, that Mr. Lamb in general has performed his services to the literary world so anonymously, and in his most trivial subjects has such a delicate and extreme sense of all that is human, that common readers have not been aware of half his merits, nor great numbers of his existence. When his writings were collected by the bookseller, people of taste were asking, who this Mr. Charles Lamb was that had written so well. They were answered—the man who set the critics right about the old English Dramatists, and whom some of them showed at once their ingratitude and their false pretensions by abusing.—Besides the works here alluded to, Mr. Lamb is the author of an interesting prose abridgment of the "Odyssey" under the title of the "Adventures of Ulysses," and has helped his sister in other little works for children (equally fit for those 'of a larger growth'), especially one called "Mrs. Leicester's School." We believe we are taking no greater liberty with him than our motives will warrant, when we add that he sometimes writes in the *London Magazine* under the signature of Elia."

The Confessions of H. F. V. H. Delamore, Esq.

(*London Magazine*, April 1821)

There can be little doubt as to the authorship of this, and there is happily no need to doubt the historical truth of the story it tells. Lamb was veritably clapt in the stocks for a few immense moments, having been guilty of "brawling" in the streetsof Barnet at a forbidden hour on a forbidden day—doubtless duvinring die service. At an earlier period of his life, we know from the truthful Talfourd, he had undergone a kindred initiation into historic mysteries. "In the first year of his clerkship," says Talfourd, quoting Le Grice, "Lamb spent the evening of the 5th November with some of his former schoolfellows, who, being amused with the particularly large and flapping brim of his round hat, pinned it up on the sides in the form of a cocked-hat. Lamb made no alteration in it, but walked home in his usual sauntering gait towards the Temple. As he was going down Ludgate Hill, some gay young men, who seemed not to have passed the London Tavern without resting, exclaimed 'The veritable Guy!—no man of straw!' and with this exclamation they took him up, making a chair with their arms, carried him, seated him on a post in St. Paul's churchyard, and there left him. This story Lamb told so seriously, that the truth of it was never doubted. He wore his three-cornered hat many evenings"—and it would even seem that he was introduced to some persons—a clergyman among others—by the name of Mr. Guy, and never known to them by any other name.

"O Clarencieux! O Norroy!" The two provincial Kings-at-Arms, whom naturally a Delamore would invoke, as the *Dei Majores* of the cosmic system in which he lived.

Elia on the Confessions of a Drunkard

(*London Magazine*, August 1822)

For the occasion of this, see the Note to "Confessions of a Drunkard," vol. i. of this edition, p. 354.

The Gentle Giantess

(*London Magazine*, December 1822)

The reader will run against the Gentle Giantess again—it is indeed impossible he should run past her—in the *Letters* (time, 1821), and there he will find that she was of Cambridge, not of Oxford, and that she bore the ample and enormous name of Smith, well planned as she was to be the bodily representative of the largest family, if not one of the largest nations, upon earth. "The maid's aunt of Brainford" (more commonly spelt Brentford) was Sir John Falstaff.

A Few Words on Christmas

(*London Magazine*, December 1822)

When I decided to include this, I was of opinion that though the entire article could hardly be by Lamb (I take it to be Hood's), yet Lamb had a hand in it, and that the description of the Beadle, which stands out markedly from every other part of the article, was most probably his.

I feel more doubtful of that now. All we know is that Lamb sent a little contribution to Hone, the one object of which was to have this passage about the Beadle transferred (by way of quotation) to the pages of the *Every Day Book*. I will therefore quote here the little contribution entire, with its bright imbedded quotation, and its picture; these appeared in the *Every Day Book* for 28 January, 1826.

"An appearance of the season"

"Apology will scarcely be required for introducing a character, who at this season of the year comes forth in renovated honours, and may aptly

be termed one of its *ever-blues*—not a peculiar of either Farringdons, nor him of Cripplegate, or St. Giles in the Fields, or of any ward or precinct within the bills: not this or that 'good man'—but the *universal parish beadle*. 'How Christmas and consolatory he looks! how redolent of good cheer is he! He is a cornucopia—an abundance. What pudding sleeves! What a collar, red, and like a beefsteak, is his! He is a walking refreshment! He looks like a whole parish, full, important—but untaxed. The children of charity gaze at him with a modest smile. The straggling boys look on him with confidence. They do not pocket their marbles. They do not fly from their familiar gutter. This is a red letter day; and the cane is reserved for to-morrow.'

"For the pleasant verbal description we are indebted to an agreeable writer in the *London Magazine*[1]; his corporeal lineaments are 'borrowed' (with permission) from a new caricature,[2] if it may be given so low a name, wherein this figure stands out, the very gem and jewel, in a grouping of characters of all sorts and denominations assembled with 'infinite fancy' and 'fun,' to illustrate the designer's views of the age. It is a graphic satire of character rather than caricatura; mostly of class-characters, not persons; wherein the ridicule bears heavily, but is broad and comprehensive enough to shift from one neighbour to another."

Guy Faux

(*London Magazine*, November 1823)

A composite article, made up of quotations from what others had written, and additions to what he had himself written, upon the subject at an earlier time. First in the *Reflector* for 1811 Lamb had an article entitled "On the Probable Effects of the Gunpowder Treason in this Country if the Conspirators had accomplished their Object." This is represented by the part from p. 131 ("The Gunpowder Treason was the subject") to the end. The earlier part of the present paper has reference to an Essay of Hazlitt's which had appeared in the *Examiner* in November 1821. There is a good deal of by-play in this, which we can only partly guess at, but at any rate the fun of describing Hazlitt as an Ex-Jesuit ("who will not obtrude himself at Maynooth again in a hurry") will not escape the reader. Lamb is known, *teste* Hazlitt himself, to have had some degree of affection for the memory of the enterprising Guido, and may not have been altogether gratified at Hazlitt's taking out of his hands the agreeable duty of writing his vindication.

Letter to an Old Gentleman

(*London Magazine*, January 1825)

In the *London Magazine* for January 1823 had been begun De Quincey's series of "Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected." Lamb seems to have felt a call immediately; for in a letter to Barton in March 1823 he says that he had lately been "engaged about a humorous paper for the *London*, which I had called 'A Letter to an Old Gentleman whose Education had been Neglected,'—and when it was done, Taylor and Hessey would not print it, and it discouraged me from doing anything else." That Lamb should have expected his editors to print at once a contribution which, however genially intended, was likely to have discouraged a brilliant and profound writer, from continuing his series—to say nothing of rather spoiling its effect even if he did continue it, with mockery running parallel in the same pages—this is one of those little queernesses which must be noted by all who would understand the mind of Charles Lamb, how largely it was held together by conquest and by control of morbidities and of freakishnesses to which a less valorous nature would have become a helpless prey. But how different was his account, when all is said! Two years later the paper appeared, it having been first submitted to De Quincey, and having "had his Probatum." The parody did not follow its original beyond the one suggestive point in De Quincey's

[1] For December 1822.

[2] The Progress of Cant; designed and etched by one of the authors of *Odes and Addresses to Great People*; and published by T. Maclean, Haymarket; L. Relf, Cornhill; and Dickenson, New Bond Street.

first letter: "Whether to you with your purposes, and at your age of thirty-two, a residence at either of our English universities, or at any foreign university can be of much service?" Of the two schoolmasters whom Lamb mentions in this parody of a very pedagoguic classic, Busby was the Head of Westminster, and perhaps the world's accepted type of the pedagogue since the death of Orbilius; and George Buchanan was a master of men as well as a schoolmaster, one of the greatest of the humanists, and the "governor," or tutor, of James the Sixth (and First), and of Montaigne.

A Vision of Horns

(*London Magazine*, January 1825)

I had intended to write an interesting disquisition upon this; but as the press waits, I must be content to refer readers to a well-known passage in the General Preface to the Macdonald edition of Lamb To what is there said, I will only add this quotation from Matthew Arnold, apropos of "unsavoury subjects" such as a play called *Much Ado About Nothing*:

"So salutary is it to be carried into a world of fantasy, that I doubt whether even the comedy of Congreve and Wycherley, presented to us at the present day by good artists, would do us harm. I would not take the responsibility of recommending its revival, but I doubt its doing harm, and I feel sure of its doing less harm than pieces such as 'Heartsease' and 'Impulse.' And the reason is that Wycherley's comedy places us in what is for us now a world wholly of fantasy, and that in such a world, with a good critic and with good actors, we are not likely to come to much harm. Such a world's main appeal is to our imagination; it calls into play our imagination rather than our senses."

And certainly it is to the imagination and not to the senses that this little fantasy makes its appeal—there is nothing so noticeable about it as its absolute innocence, its cleanness, its child-like gleefulness and joy. This also let me add: some unfortunate person has challenged a statement which I made—without book, it is true, and in the exuberance of undocumented wisdom—in the pages cited above: "But, unsavoury or no, the subject is a pretty universal one, as all literature testifies, to say nothing of the lesser literature of unprinted quip and joke, which has always had its currency, its proper moments, in the intercourse of frank-natured and the pure, *women not always being out of the company, nor always of the lowest class.*" Well: not to go out of the way of the best family-reading for an instance, let me say that the Vicar of Wakefield's good wife was as respectable a woman as I want to know. Yet was she a true Shakespearean in her metaphors and her conversational modes of raillery and attack; nor do I think that any passage in that great scripture would have offended her less than the philosophic meditation of Touchstone, that "as a walled town is more honourable than a village, so is the forehead of a married man more honourable than the bare brow of a bachelor."

The Illustrious Defunct

(*New Monthly Magazine*, January 1825)

This paper affords a strong argument, nor is it the only instance, against the unfortunate editorial theory which disparages—and would, apparently, fain exclude from the canon of Lamb's proper *Works*—those later Essays which he did not himself include in either of his "Elia" volumes. There are very few papers in either of these volumes which could be set above this one, judged by every quality which makes literature vital and which has made Charles Lamb's literature especially endeared: yet Charles Lamb did not reprint it. The Lottery System was by law abolished—as it had been by law established—shortly after this Essay appeared. It is a fact that Blue-coat boys were the official executors of Fate, and drew the lots or tickets at the Guildhall in the way he describes. He does not mention that the twenty-thousand-pound prize was won in 1796, upon her tenth birthday, by Mary Russell Mitford, of *Our Village*. As to lottery-puffs, it is known that Lamb had turned an honest penny in that department of literary work in his earlier time. Chateaubriand was of course not the author of the saying "Le roi est mort: vive le roi." Nor is it, as most people suppose, a satire upon flattery and time-serving. It had a

constitutional significance, precluding the idea of an interregnum, of a period void of the virtues of regality—it asserted that as soon as a king had ceased to live, a king began to reign.

Unitarian Protests

(*London Magazine*, February 1825)

I do not know who the particular Unitarian friend was, and perhaps he was nobody in particular. The main group of writers to the *London* were or had been Unitarians, including Lamb himself.

Many Friends

(*New Times*, 8 January, 1825)

This was the first of the series of little Essays that have been called the "Lepus Papers." The signature (*Lepus*=a Hare) was chosen with regard to the subject of this, the first paper of the series, and was afterwards continued merely as a mark of the contributor's identity. It involves a reference, however, which is not yet quite clear, to some story of a Hare and Many Friends. It looks as if Lamb had written a little book of that title for Godwin, in his *Prince Dorus* days; but if so, it has been lost. "A hare makes many friends," he says in "Popular Fallacies," playing upon some received connotation of the terms. As to this article, the first form of it, we may say, is to be found in the letter to Mrs. Wordsworth, 18 February 1818, and its concentrated virtues in a letter to Coleridge, 2 July 1825, in which, after referring to a nervous fever which "indisposes me for seeing my friends," he adds, "never any poor devil was so befriended as I am. Do you know any poor solitary human that wants that cordial to life, a true friend? I can spare him twenty; he shall have 'em good cheap. I have gallipots of 'em—genuine balm of cares—a going, a going, a going!" Which, the reader knows quite well, is not to be taken just as it is written. He could not have spared one of these friends—though he might have spared a visit or two—and had one of them by chance gone astray, he'd have gone out at midnight to search for him in the dark! Nevertheless, this was his humour at times, so he gave it play at proper seasons: as in the Popular Fallacy, "That Home is Home though it is Never so Homely (vol. i., pp. 313–17. "Captain Beacham's family we shall meet again in a letter to Landor.

Tom Pry: Tom Pry's Wife

(*New Times*, 8 and 28 February, 1825)

I doubt whether those two were married. There are touches, but very faint touches, of Godwin in the sketch of Mr. Pry, but Mrs. Pry is beyond all doubt the ineludible Mrs. Godwin. See Note to "Old Maids" in this volume.

Reflections in the Pillory

(*London Magazine*, March 1825)

This, with the "Ode to the Treadmill" and the various excursions on the topic of hanging, are the "literary documents" for a marked and rich-stocked region of the Elian psychology. The editorial notes are of course Elian also. The speaker, it ought to be explained, makes his necessity appear his pleasure when he requests Ketch to turn him to all the points of the compass in succession. For the law and order was that he should be so turned, that every member of the crowd might see his man and, if impelled thereto, make his mark. "My old friends from over the water" are the King's Bench Prisoners (viz. committed debtors), whose domicile was in Southwark, but who were permitted to come forth from durance for some part of the day, on conditions. Hence "flies of a day."

The Last Peach

(*London Magazine*, April 1825)

The origin of this article is again a passage in a letter. Writing to Bernard Barton on 1 December, 1824, he falls into a train of reflections prompted by the sad end of Fauntleroy, who on the previous morning had been hanged for forgery. Fauntleroy was a bank clerk: "so was Bernard Barton." "The fate of the unfortunate Fauntleroy makes me, whether I will or no, to cast reflecting eyes around upon such of my friends as, by a parity of situation, are exposed to a similarity of temptation. My very style seems to myself to become more impressive than usual, with the change of theme. Who that standeth, knoweth but he may yet fall? Your hands as yet, I am most willing to believe have never deviated." Whether little Charles Lamb, however, ever stole a peach at Blakesware, we do not know; but must hope for the best. Certainly the feelings which he here describes seem very like the little boy—standing alone in the Universe with his guilt—of whom there was a picture in the original edition of *Poetry for Children*: and "that" was the little boy who

One day, left alone,
Laid hands on something not his own!

A Character

(*New Times*, 25 August, 1825)

It seems useless going in search of this gentleman: we should be sure to pass him by, if we moved a step.

A Popular Fallacy

(*New Monthly Magazine*, June 1826)

Was one of the series, which Colburn seemed to use reluctantly. This one was omitted by Lamb when he put together the *Last Essays*. It has perhaps got less in it than anything he ever wrote: or else the fun is so fine that it eludes the senses of all but the utterly *raffiné* in the art of being jocular. It is one of the things, however, which remind us that Lamb's reading was much more various and deep, that his memory was more retentive, and that he had much greater stores of "exact" knowledge, than it pleased him to acknowledge or than it is customary to credit him with.

Reminiscences of Juke Judkins, Esq.

(*New Monthly Magazine*, June 1826)

It is unlikely that Lamb should have been able to write a serial story that would have been satisfactory from the point of view of action and incident; but this is so capital a character study and so subtly touched—done indeed with rare relish—that everybody must wish Lamb had carried the attempt a few stages farther before abandoning it. But the truth seems to be that Colburn did not use Lamb's contributions quickly enough, so Lamb's interest in them and in the magazine had leisure to die of waiting or of ennui.

Remarkable Correspondent: Dog Days

(*Every Day Book*, 1 May and 14 July, 1825)

The *Every Day Book* was a publication of William Hone's, which appeared serially in 1825 and 1826, the two completed volumes being published in 1826 and 1827 respectively. It was followed in 1827 by the *Table Book*, also published serially in the first instance. To both of these

Lamb contributed original papers and interesting extracts from old or curious books, besides that the whole of his "Garrick Extracts" were expressly made for the *Table Book*. It is probable that we do not know the full extent of Lamb's literary assistance rendered to Hone, just as we have only a vague knowledge of the transactions and trouble involved at a later time in getting Hone established in a business likely to be more profitable than honest publishing. For this, the reader must look to the *Letters*. At any rate, Hone had already in 1826 not only an enthusiastic admiration and esteem for Lamb, but also a very lively sense of favours received. Witness the fact that when the first series of the *Every Day Book* was published as a volume in 1826, it carried this dedication:

"TO CHARLES LAMB, ESQ.

"Dear L——,—Your letter to me, within the first two months from the commencement of the present work, approving my notice of St. Chad's Well, and your afterwards daring to publish me your 'friend,' with your 'proper name' annexed, I shall never forget. Nor can I forget your and Miss Lamb's sympathy and kindness when glooms outmastered me; and that your pen spontaneously sparkled in the book, when my mind was in clouds and darkness. These trifles, as each of you would call them, are benefits scored upon my heart; and

"I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME,
"TO YOU AND MISS LAMB,
"WITH AFFECTIONATE RESPECT

5 May, 1826. "W. HONE."

As to the "Remarkable Correspondent": it was called forth by the fact that the *Every Day Book*—which professed to render an account of the remarkable occurrences, legends, ceremonies, customs, superstitions, etc., associated with each several day in the year—had passed at a step from the Twenty-eighth-of-February to the First-of-March.

As to the letter of "Pompey," it could not of course bear two signatures, but we cannot doubt that Charles Lamb held the pen which drafted the complaint of that most intelligent, if also "sad" dog. The paragraph at the end, however, has every appearance of being really editorial—i.e. William Hone's comment—and therefore appears here rather than there:

"This 'sad dog' is a 'sensible dog,' and must know, that England is by no means favourable to him or his fellow-creatures. Dogs here are mostly the property of persons who by 'training,' and 'working,' and 'fighting' them, drive many of them mad, and render every dog at this season an object of fear. They have, at present, the right to do wrong to dogs, and the liberty of making them as brutal as themselves. If a few of these dogmasters were tied up, as an example to others, dogs might have rights and liberties. The condition of the lower animals will improve with the subjugation of the passions in the master-animal, man."

CAPTAIN STARKEY

(*Every Day Book*, 21 July, 1825)

This was called forth by an article in the *Every Day Book* for 9 July, 1825, containing a review of the very brief autobiography named in the footnote. It must have been as great a surprise to Hone to discover that he had inserted an article so strongly and personally interesting to Charles and Mary Lamb, as it was to them to find the name of Starkey emerging from out of the dark backward and abysm of time, which seemed to have engulfed it and him and all memory of either. But for this chance occurrence, we should never have known anything of those early days at the Fetter Lane Academy; nor have we, unfortunately, been able to add anything to what Lamb has told us in this little paper. For Captain Starkey's portrait, see next page.

The Humble Petition of an Unfortunate Day

(*Every Day Book*, 12 August, 1825)

On the twelfth of August, 1762, had been born George, afterwards Regent, and later, in heaven's good time, King of England. Up to the time of his accession to the throne, his birthday was kept upon the anniver-

sary of his birth; but after that date it was kept on the 23rd of April, which, as the reader knows, is St. George's Day, and the assumed date also of Shakespeare's birth. The subject will be found touched upon earlier in a lively passage of the Essay "Rejoicings on the New Year's Coming of Age.

The Ass

(*Every Day Book*, 5 October, 1825)

There is a letter to J. Payne Collier, in which Lamb thanks him for a present of the *Poetical Decameron*, and says, "I take less pleasure in books than heretofore, but I like books about books. In the second volume in particular are treasures . . . the character of the Ass with those three lines, worthy to be set in gilt vellum and worn in frontlets by the noble beasts for ever. . . . Cervantes, Sterne, and Coleridge have said positively nothing for asses compared with this."

In re Squirrels

(*Every Day Book*, 18 October, 1825)

A communication to the *Gentleman's Magazine* on the subject of squirrels had been reprinted by Hone on 7 October, and the topic was continued. Sylvanus Urban's correspondent, besides maintaining that squirrels "have an exact musical ear," had opined that the teeth of the squirrel are "of a deep orange colour"—which, whether true or no, enabled Charles Lamb to give a new meaning to the word Orangery.

The Months

(*Every Day Book*, 16 April, 1826)

Lacking the daring which should add a word to the words of Hannah Woolley, let me quote the characteristic grace (a real *gratia*, or Grace-before-meat) with which Hone prefaced this contribution:—"C. L., whose papers under these initials on 'Captain Starkey,' 'The Ass, No. 2,' and 'Squirrels,' besides other communications, are in the first volume, drops the following pleasant article 'in an hour of need.'"

Reminiscence of Sir Jeffery Dunstan

(*Every Day Book*, 22 June, 1826)

This had reference to an article by Hone upon the so-called Garrat election. The reader will ask, "Where is Garrat?" and the question is best answered by transcribing the passage quoted by Hone from Phillips's *A Morning's Walk from London to Kew*, 1817.

"Southward of Wandsworth, a road extends nearly two miles to the village of Lower Tooting, and nearly midway are a few houses, or hamlet, by the side of a small common, called Garrat, from which the road itself is called Garrat Lane. Various encroachments on this common led to an association of the neighbours about three-score years since, when they

chose a president, or 'mayor,' to protect their rights; and the time of their first election being the period of a new Parliament, it was agreed that the mayor should be re-chosen after every general election. Some facetious members of the club gave, in a few years, local notoriety to this election; and, when party spirit ran high in the days of 'Wilkes and Liberty,' it was easy to create an appetite for a burlesque election among the lower orders of the metropolis. The publicans at Wandsworth, Tooting, Battersea, Clapham and Vauxhall made a purse to give it character, and Mr. Foote rendered its interest universal by calling one of his inimitable farces *The Mayor of Garrat*."

So much for the place and the office. As to the man, "Sir" Jeffery Dunstan was not the first to be raised to the honours of this peculiar

mayoralty, for he was preceded by "Sir" John Harper, who in his private capacity was a retailer of brickdust and, says Hone, "his Garrat honours being supposed to be a means of improving his trade and the condition of his ass, many characters in similar occupations were led to aspire to the same functions." To him succeeded Sir Jeffery Dunstan, whose profession in life was the buying of old wigs—a business that seems half-way between those of a human-hair dealer and an old-clothes man. Hone describes how Sir Jeffery was wont to trudge along, carrying his bag over his shoulder long after business had ceased—wigs having gone into "die Ewigkeit"—how, to avoid the charge of vagrancy, he would vociferate "Old wigs!" at intervals as he went along. "But having a person like Æsop, and a countenance and manner marked by irresistible humour, he never appeared without a train of boys and curious persons whom he entertained by his sallies of wit, shrewd sayings, and smart repartees; and from whom, without begging, he collected sufficient to maintain his dignity as mayor and knight." And he being "no respecter of persons," the sequel to his habit of talking in the open—where a bird of the air might carry

the matter, if a bird could be found small-brained enough to think it worth carrying—was that Sir Jeffery, whose portrait is here given, was actually prosecuted for uttering what were then considered seditious expressions, and was in 1793 tried, convicted, and imprisoned for that august crime. The burgesses of Garrat seem to have been affrighted at this. They looked askance upon Sir Jeffery, that their own loyalty might not become suspect; and at the general election of 1796 he was unseated, being supplanted in popularity and in official position by Sir Harry Dimsdale, muffin-seller, and, says Hone, "a man as deformed as himself." The above portrait of Sir Harry appears in the *Every Day Book*, along with that of his greatly fallen predecessor.

"My Lord Foppington" seems to have agreeably impressed Mr. Charles Lamb, who has given to his Lordship's dictum the honours of reiterated quotation, and therefore a world-wide fame. See especially *Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading*, vol. i. of this edition, p. 201.

Of Maid Marian and Robin Hood

(*The Table Book*, 17 and 24 May, 1827)

The first of the "Garrick Extracts" was a scene from *King John and Matilda, a Tragedy, by Robert Davenport*, and there can be little doubt that the same wits which selected the passage for quotation also exercised themselves in this queer bit of playfulness upon the theme which the subject offered to those disposed to reason curiously or to stand upon the common meanings of terms. It is because these two letters are merely a piece of play upon a term or an idea, and in no sense a criticism or comment on the drama, that they have their place here and not in *Critical Essays*.

Mrs. Gilpin Riding to Edmonton

(*The Table Book*, 16 July, 1827)

The sketch referred to by the Sojourner in Enfield was the work of Thomas Hood, that prime genius and hearty fellow, as Lamb called him; and the substantial city madam represented was Mary Lamb herself. The *Letters* of those years show that Lamb was interested in the subject of stiles about that countryside; and Mary's difficulty in negotiating them, when she was his "walk-companion," may have had to do with that interest.

London Fogs

This is copied from a small manuscript book entitled *The Works of Charles Lamb*, vol. iii. Into this book William Ayrton had copied various works of Lamb's, which belonged to a later date than the *Works* of 1818—and also a thing or two that was not Lamb's at all. All these things had seen the light of print elsewhere, except this: which may also, of course, have been printed somewhere. One can hardly doubt of its authenticity; and, besides Lamb's signature, it bears a particular Elian reminiscence: for the words, "It wraps you all round like a cloak, too, a patent waterproof one," remind us that at the end of those famous Rejoicings upon the New Year's Coming of Age, when the gathering broke up and the company went each their several ways, "Shortest Day went off in a deep black Fog, that wrapt the little gentleman all round like a hedgehog."

Saturday Night

(*The Gem*, 1830)

The Gem was one of the Keepsake or Beauty-Book annuals, of which there were so many about that time. It had been edited in 1829 by Hood, who, being disappointed of a contribution by Lamb, put in one of his own with Lamb's signature. In 1830 the editor was Alaric A. Watts, whose name is synonymous with that kind of literature. This little article (which need not be taken very literally, I fancy, as a personal

reminiscence of Lamb's only and honoured Grandame, but rather as a piece of "typical" description of the known ways of all the world's grandmothers in times of old) was written merely as letterpress to an engraving from Wilkie's picture, which is here reproduced.

Thoughts on Presents of Game

(*Athenæum*, 30 November, 1833)

Who the "Good Unknown" was, we do not know; but he did a good turn to a very large public when he provoked Charles Lamb, so late in 1833, to an utterance so redolent, so full of the old Elian relish, as this. The Mr. Chambers (junior) here referred to was a fellow-clerk at the India House, and there is a letter to a brother of his—the subject, John Dory — which is the only thing perhaps, in all Lamb's correspondence, that one might be tempted to rank, as literature and rapture, above his panegyric of Jeremy Taylor. It will appear, however, in its proper place. "The worthy Vicar of Enfield" was Dr. Cresswell; and a worthy man he was, as we know by these presents ("of extraordinary sapor") and by the fact that he desired to have a presentation copy of "Satan in Search of a Wife."

A Character of the Late Elia

(*London Magazine*, January 1823)

The first note to *Last Essays of Elia* gives some account of the circumstances belonging to the writing of this: what Lamb seems to have had in view, and how the idea of Elia's death was taken up and exploited in the magazine. It was necessary to print it in our second volume with all the curtailments which the author made upon it when fitting it to serve as preface to the second Elia book. But here it is repeated, in its original entirety, not for us redundant by a single syllable, with its pleasant references to the *London* men ("P——r" is of course Procter, and "Janus," who wept, is the genial and abominable Wainwright, and "Allan C——" is Allan Cunningham, and "his friends, T. and H.," are, strange though the term appears, his publishers, Taylor and Hessey), and still more desirable, with its roll-call of India House men, whose names, and a magic word or two attached to them, wake in our minds some echo of that music to the sound of which the great, the almost mythic, personalities of the South Sea House once passed athwart our ken. I regret infinitely that the drawings, which I hoped should accompany this fuller reprinting of the Essay, were not made; nor did I discover that they had not been made till it was too late to remedy the matter. But there are compensations to every disaster: and my compensation is in thinking that those who do not like to have Lamb illustrated will read this note and rejoice. They are a minority, but even the most insignificant minority must be allowed its moments of triumph, its intervals of happiness.

Charles Lamb's Autobiography

This was written by Lamb in the Autograph Book of William Upton, who was Assistant Librarian of the London Institution; and was by Upton's permission quoted in John Forster's admirable article on Lamb in the *New Monthly Magazine* for April 1835. The original manuscript is now in the possession of Mr. B. B. Macgeorge, of Dunoon, who has very kindly checked by it the copy sent to the printers for this edition.

A Death-Bed

(*The Table Book*, 1827: *Last Essays of Elia*, 1833)

Upon the death of Randal Norris in January 1827, Lamb wrote to Crabb Robinson a memorial letter which was intended, we may suppose, to be shown to those influential persons, the Benchers, whose sympathy Lamb wished to engage on behalf of the widow and family of his old friend.

Perhaps it was to drive home this indirect application that he sent the letter, under the above title, with his signature L. and with certain necessary changes of names and initials, to the *Table Book*. It had its effect, at any rate; for Mr. Carew W. Hazlitt finds that "the Inn, probably through the friendly offices of Crabb Robinson, settled on Mrs. Norris an annuity of £80." The letter, in its *Table Talk* version, appeared in the first edition of the *Last Essays of Elia*, but was omitted from the second edition, and "Confessions of a Drunkard" put in its place. As I have said in my note to the latter Essay, it is pretty certain that, in making this change, Moxon was acting in the spirit of Lamb's own intention. If we wish to know why he decided ultimately to leave out "A Death-Bed," we need not guess obscurely at the feelings of the Norris family and their probable dislike to having their straitened circumstances made a sort of literary topic. The reason is, in fact, to be found within the book itself. That volume contained the Essay "Captain Jackson," which had been written some years earlier, and in which Randal Norris had already sat for his portrait, or rather—since there are considerable differences—had sat for the portrait, so to say, of himself-and-somebody-else. When making his selection for the *Last Essays*, Lamb probably overlooked the marked likeness of the description in those two papers, which must have struck readers as being a curious repetition within the boards of a small book, such as would have argued, in another case, either an uncommon poverty or an uncommon absent-mindedness in the author. Having had his attention called to this, and having therefore to exclude one of those two papers, because of the passages or the pages in common, he naturally decided to retain the more full and finished, and more sheerly literary and disinterested study of earlier years. Randal Norris, the reader will hardly need to be reminded, was the Sub-Treasurer of the Inner Temple, and his wife belonged to Widford—hence, in part, the life-long friendship with the Lamb family—but whether he was the same Mr. Norris of Christ's Hospital whom Lamb speaks of in September 1796, seems to remain an unsettled point.

Table Talk

Detailed citation of the sources of these paragraphs will hardly be demanded by the reader. Like the "Fragments of Criticism" in vol. ii., they are taken "either from 'Table Talk by the Late Elia,' which appeared in the *Athenæum* in 1834 (January—July); or from earlier Table Talk in the *Examiner*, which was mostly republished in the *Indicator*; or from some corner of the *London Magazine*; or from footnotes to the Essays in their first form, that were afterwards dropped as encumbrances." Of this last kind is No. 14, which ought to have appeared amongst other critical particles at the end of *Essays and Sketches*. Finally, some (such as No. 71) are from Babson's *Eliana*.

This first and main section of the Complete Works ends fortunately, passing away in a vision of Metropolitan regions and places. One would think our Londoner was surveying the entire terrestrial scene of things, in its relation to the life and happiness of man: that there was nowhere else in which to be fully content. Yet fitly, too, there is an uncompromising avowal of preference and prejudice, discriminating among the particulars of a cherished whole. And there is humour, which might easily be missed. For when he avers that he never knew a man of taste to live "Over the Bridge," and then adds—"Observe, in this place I speak solely of 'chosen' and 'voluntary' residence"—there is a sly glance at those Surrey-side dwellers to whom reference has been made in the note on "Reflections in the Pillory," and among whom "men of taste," of one kind or another, were pretty sure to be rather plentiful subjects, some of them rather interesting.

CRITICAL ESSAYS

Curious Fragments

(*John Woodvil* volume, 1801; *Works* 1818)

Writing to Manning in March 1800, Lamb says: "I am living in a continuous feast. Coleridge has been with me now for nigh three weeks, and the more I see him in the quotidian undress and relaxation of his mind, the more cause I see to love him. . . . He is uncommonly kind and friendly to me. He ferrets me day and night to do "something." . . . He has lugged me to the brink of engaging to a newspaper, and has suggested to me for a first plan the forgery of a supposed manuscript by Burton, the anatomist of melancholy. I have even written the introductory letter; and, if I can pick up a few guineas this way, it will be most "refreshing," bread being so dear. If I go on, I will apprise you of it, as you may like to see my things!"

The newspaper referred to was the *Morning Post*, for which Coleridge had begun to write in December 1799. And as he was always trying at this time—"amidst all his own worryings and heart-oppressing occupations"—to link the gentle-hearted Charles on to life and literature, he naturally sought at once to connect him with the paper to which he was himself an esteemed contributor. His choice of subject-matter for a trial paper said a good deal for his knowledge of Lamb's character and powers, and of the kind of thing that Lamb was likely to attempt with abandon and relish, and therefore to notable effect: but it said miraculously little for his knowledge of the world, and of the ways-of-thinking of wise editors in all ages. By Coleridge's own testimony, Daniel Stuart was one of the wisest of that order that ever lived; and he ought also to have known that it is the first and chief wisdom of an editor to reject the good contribution which is bad copy. Now "Burton," said Lamb himself, "is a scarce gentlemen, not much known;" and we need not wonder that wisest Stuart would have nothing to do with him. To the readers of the *Morning Post*, or the *Morning Chronicle*, an exercise in imitation of old Burton, however masterly, was of no more interest than would have been the washing-bills of Hecuba—a good deal less, indeed, judging by the long prosperity of that poor joke-subject, "A fashion of pink hose."

Nevertheless, Lamb said no more than the truth when he claimed for those exercises in archaistic style and, so-to-say, mental idiom, that, apart from their unfitness for a newspaper, "I had done 'em pretty well." The first Extract is hardly the best, and in its opening it is perhaps not done just well enough. In the first two or two-and-a-half pages we are reminded of that fault which make so feeble those imitations of Elia himself which were essayed by his friends Patmore, Hone and others: namely, a relying too much upon the external marks of the known writer's hand; an over-emphasis of peculiarities; a mere heaping-up of the idiosyncratic rubbish of odd words, making a monument or cairn of verbiage above the thinnest ghost of a factitious meaning. This externality and hollowness, this want of stout mental core and sap and savour, is the common nemesis of Parody, especially of prose Parody; and the fact that Lamb did not escape it here in the beginning is not so notable as the fact that he did escape it so well before the end. As he goes on, his mind more and more fits into and fills out the mould of linguistic peculiarity in which he elected to express himself; until that mould becomes not a restraint, but a vehicle of meaning, not a carapace but a cuticle, mobile and adaptive to the life within. In other words, those Extracts, for all their factitious origin, are not a little impressive, and contain true matter of the mind. And some of that matter is not a little curious: for instance, the passage towards the end of Extract I. which describes the third and last stage of the Lover, so much worse than the first; when, after being "disenthralled, manumitted, wondering what so bewitched him," and having a distaste rather than any other feeling towards the mistress to whom he had poured out his heart in vain—"upon a day, behold a wonder, *redit Amor*, he is commenced lover upon the old stock," and, without losing any of his distaste for the mistress who has survived herself, goes freshly distraught upon the image that his mind once had of her. There is in this passage a modernity, a research, a *curiosité* that is not a little remarkable;

and indeed had this piece of analysis appeared, say, three years ago (differently phrased, of course, and stopping short of its excesses, its final exaggeration into the descriptive grotesque) in the subtle pages of a psychologist like Mr. Arthur Symons,—then critics would have marked it as being "merely" modern, merely decadent, and so would have dismissed it to the limbo of reprimanded cleverness. But I note the passage mainly because there are suggestions, at least, of self-knowledge having taught Lamb what he knew of this recondite and rather rare phenomenon —of the love which has left the heart, yet maintaining its hold upon the brain by the affinity which it once had with all ideals, all dreams, all the generous thoughts which harmonised life. He may have ached at the thought of Alice W——n, and murmured her name, unconsciously, like a sick child, many a long month after she had ceased to be to him an object of any desire, or even to seem womanly and worthy.

Lamb first published "Curious Fragments" in the *John Woodvil* volume, 1801. There they consisted of four Extracts, and included two poetical pieces: "A Conceipt of Diabolical Possession," and "A Ballad, Noting the Difference of Rich and Poor." When preparing the "Fragments" for publication in his Works (1818) he pruned them considerably, retouched a word here and there, removed the two verse compositions and placed them among his Poems. This not being an antiquarian edition of Lamb, nor a book of reference, but just a sufficiently-equipped edition of his works, I do not, of course, load the pages with discussion or extensive citation of these differences: neither in this case, nor another. Whether the thing is worth doing, need not be asked. Most things are worth doing, in the right place; but this is not the place for it. I ought, however, to explain that in this instance I have departed a little from Lamb's own instructions, in that I have appended the "Conceipt of Diabolical Possession" (under its final title of "Hypochondriacus") to the "Fragments." I do not see how these verses can receive fair play, or be read with any relish of their quality and their dramatic, their idiosyncratic character, if they are removed from the system of things—the atmosphere of thought and literary manner—in which they first lived and breathed and had their being. If I could have done the same by the "Ballad Noting the Difference of Rich and Poor" without being committed to a nefarious restoration of Lamb's discarded prose passages, I should have done it; for that poem also belongs, though in a lesser degree, not so much to Charles Lamb's own works (a man's works being his self-expression, even in dramatic poetry) as it belongs to a particular exercise in imitation, largely non-personal and fantastic. Finally, in taking this course, I am happy to say that I have the great sanction and support of Canon Ainger's example: an authority with whom I have gone to war on some of the general questions of editing, but one for whose judgment in the "finer issues"—not to call them the smaller things—I have a respect which it was an economy (both of labour to me, and of the Reader's attention) to put out of account while attending to the urgent matters of dispute. I may say, as an instance of this, that the commentatorial remark which, more than any other I have met, it would best please my little vanity to be able to claim for my own, has been made by Canon Ainger upon an Essay of Charles Lamb.

Lastly, it will be seen that these "Fragments" abound in learned citations of authorities, some of whom existed and some of whom did not. The names were necessary, else the thing had not been an imitation of Burton; but whether the names were more than names—whether these shadows on the page belonged to any true substance in the days of old —made no difference to Charles Lamb and it ought to make no difference to the congenial reader.

Cooke's "Richard the Third"

(*Morning Post*, 4 January, 1802)

George Frederick Cooke (born 1756, died 1811) made perhaps a stronger mark upon his generation than any other actor of whom Lamb has left a set piece of criticism, excepting only Kemble and Mrs. Siddons. The defects as much as the qualities of his acting may have contributed to the result, but certain it is that his career, and the fame of his impersonations, lived in tradition much longer, and over a far wider area, than the fame of, say, Munden, Elliston, Suett, Bensley or Palmer. I myself have heard, earlier than I can remember reading anything, much talk about the great

appearances and the great improvisations of Cooke, from those who might have their knowledge by recollection or by hearsay, but certainly not by mere "reading"—from the generation, I mean, that was fast disappearing a quarter of a century ago, of the men whose talk enabled one to understand how the battles in the Peninsula were won and what a great hero Wellington was. Cooke also had his touch of the heroic, with only too much of the Brinsley vein: a man of the eighteenth century, declamatory, rhetorical, striking—not so much theatrical as born actor in everything—and living too well or too ill, but certainly drinking too hard. His art seems to have been that second-best great art which is difficult to define, but of which I think we may say that for the mass of humanity it is better than the very best. And I doubt very much whether Lamb would have written of a G. F. Cooke in 1822 as he writes of this one in 1802. "How absolute the knave is;" and the knave is very absolute in all of us when we are young, and when we are just "commenced critics," as Lamb would say. Certainly, for all its intellectual value and rightness, this paper is not a piece of dramatic criticism at all, but a piece of literary criticism. Instead of looking steadily at the "actor," and judging of the qualities, the coherence and power of his impersonation of the character, according to his histrionic conception of it—the critic here harks back to the "writer," and asks whether the character presented to us by the actor is the character, in all respects, which the dramatist meant. There are times, however, when what Shakespeare meant is of no consequence.

Cooke as "Lear"

(*Morning Post*, January 9, 1802)

The late Mr. Dykes Campbell, by whom the preceding article was first recovered and reprinted in the *Athenæum* in 1888, speaks of Lamb having ceased to write dramatic criticisms for the *Morning Post* in 1802, because he found he could not "write against time." He says that Lamb had tried it on one occasion, and failed. There seems to be a want of coherence in the history here, unless it is implied that Lamb had been in the habit of writing for the *Morning Post* dramatic criticisms which were not "theatrical reporting." I find no trace of matter of this sort in the paper that bears any marks by which we should recognise it for his. I take it that the story is merely this: Lamb had seen Cooke play "Richard" in 1801, and his literary sense was at once in arms against the violent, over-obvious, stage-scenic representation of what he felt to be a subtle and not uncharming Shakespearian character. Thanks to the stimulus of this disagreement, to the fermentation and formulation of ideas which it led to, this visit to Covent Garden while Cooke played Richard was rather an important moment in the mental history of Charles Lamb. His feelings on the subject overflowed in a letter to Robert Lloyd, and we may be sure that they overflowed also in his nightly conversation with the fit audience, except in so far as his slight stutter may have kept them back. Finally, he relieved his mind upon the subject in the preceding critique upon Cooke's "Richard," a piece of good mental work, very carefully and compactly done. I take it that he offered this to Stuart, partly on its merits as an "occasional article" and partly as a 'prentice-piece or sample of what he might do if given an opportunity in that department. Stuart saw that it was good, and also gave him his opportunity: that is to say, when *Lear* was produced a week later with Cooke in the title part, Stuart turned Lamb on to do the report. But Lamb found that writing a careful dramatic criticism, in his own time, and where or when he liked, was one thing: theatrical reporting was quite another. In a word, he could not think and find phrases with the readiness of less discerning, less rich, and therefore less embarrassed minds—he could not spin out his column of good enough stuff (that is good for nothing in the long run) with the printer's devil at his elbow. So the article was a failure, if only because it was too short, because it wanted facile expansiveness and verbosity. This I take to be the "one occasion" spoken of by Mr. Campbell; and it followed, instead of preceding, the more literary and studious Essay in Dramatic Criticism which had Cooke's "Richard" for subject, but which was not a piece of theatrical reporting at all, any more than the Essay on "Shakespeare's Tragedies."

But if the article was too short to please its first editor, the present editor has been guilty of making it shorter still. In preparing the

transcription for the printer's hands, I either inadvertently ran a pencil through the last paragraphs, or mislaid the folio on which they were written. They are not of tragic importance, but here they are:

"Mr. H. Siddons was an excellent "Edgar"; his mad scenes displayed much chaste and natural acting, and several passages were marked with beauties peculiarly his own. His representation of the character would be still more interesting, were he to infuse into his manner more fondness for his mistress, "Cordelia," and his unfortunate father, the "Earl of Gloucester." Miss Murray, whose excellence in characters of simple pathos is so well known, was a most interesting portrait of "Cordelia." She played her part with great delicacy and feeling, sweetness, and simplicity.

"Mr. Hull, in "Glo'ster," was natural and impressive; and Mr. Waddy, though a little coarse as "Earl of Kent," was a good picture of blunt honesty in his humble disguise as "Caius." The other characters did not possess much merit, or deserve much notice."

On Shakespeare's Tragedies

(*Reflector*, No. iv., 1812)

This was to have been the first of a series of Essays in Dramatic Criticism, as is shown both by the promise of the last paragraph and by the heading of the article in the *Reflector*: "Theatralia, No. 1. On Garrick and Acting; and the Plays of Shakespeare considered with reference to their fitness for Stage Representation." The series was not continued, because the *Reflector* ended with No. iv.—we may say that having brought forth the most momentous single prose contribution which any English literary journal ever contained, it not unfitly died of the mighty birth. This Essay alone—or this, with the Hogarth Essay and the Notes to the "Dramatic Specimens"—marked the perfect avatar of Lamb as "Critic," and formed the basis of that incomparable respect in which he was held by the fit and few during all the years between this time and the publication of *Elia*. Not many would now maintain that his argument, in so far as it is negative and destructive, is quite free from an element of fallacy, a suspicion of injustice to the poor interpreters of the Infinite Meaning. But what of that? In the act of enforcing his fallacy (if any fallacy there be) he evolves, and sets forth resplendently, truths of greater power and reach, more wonder-working and emotional, than the merely differential truth, the marginal qualification, which his argument for the moment ignores. And the question might still be debated, how far he does ignore a marginal truth at all in regarding the physical manifestations or histrionic expressions of emotion as something in themselves mechanical, external; things that may be taught by the stage schoolmaster, and that may be practised successfully in the absence of any inner soul of comprehension, sympathy or moral approximation to the mind that first conceived the part, the character and situation, which the actor seeks to present. It is one of those questions in which, at the end of art, we come upon the beginning of science. It will hardly be answered to any effect until the new science of psycho-physics has made some considerable progress, and until we begin to know a little more about the inter-relations of what we suppose to be our bodies and what we presume to be our souls. And yet, one may say, it does seem pretty certain that mere physical superbness, an exquisite and, so to say, instant and entire perfection of balance in the parts of the visible machine, are capable of a great deal, and may produce opulent effects without making any noticeable draught upon the riches of the mind. For instance, though one would not think of suggesting that Mrs. Siddons wanted any quality of heart or soul that was needed to identify her, in the great moments of acting, with Shakespeare's women—yet surely it was not "these" qualities in her which caused Sir Walter Scott to shudder when he saw her, at the dinner-table, "stab the potatoes"; or which filled him (or somebody else) with awe on hearing her exclaim: "I asked for water, boy! you've brought me beer." Again, all the traditions and all the written records unite to prove that Rachel had neither an intelligent mind nor a noble nature; and yet, upon the stage, she could never be less than a goddess or a queen, in utterance, act, or agony.

In the way of elucidation: no reader of Lamb, surely, wants to be told that "Mr. K." was John Kemble, or that "Mrs. S." was Sarah Siddons.

But "Barnwell" and "Glenalvon" are no longer household words, as they once were. George Barnwell, the hero of Lillo's drama of that name, was an apprentice, who was seduced into iniquity by the fascinations of Mistress Sarah Millwood of Shoreditch. He began by robbing his master of £200 and ended by robbing and murdering his uncle, a rich grazier. More accurately, he ended by suspercollation, and Mistress Sarah with him. A notion once prevailed—and a very curious point this marks in the history of social and moral ideas in England—that the temptation to become a thief and a murderer was one especially besetting poor people and apprentices. That the latter, especially, might be warned in time of what awaited them if they yielded to their natural bent in that direction, it was customary to have this improving play staged at holiday times, as Easter Monday and Boxing Night, when 'prentices were apt to rejoice. "Glenalvon," again, is the villain of the piece in Home's *Douglas*, which had also a hero, "whose name was Norval," as everybody has heard.

"The Orrery Lecturer in the Haymarket." I think there is a touch of sarcasm here, and that Lamb says "Orrery Lecturer" very much as Matthew Arnold might have spoken of one of the "Professors" at a certain British College of Health, to which he used to refer with delight. This reminds me of an excellent story which has never, I believe, been printed. Nearly as far back as the middle of last century there was a gifted member of that Senatus Academicus at Edinburgh who looked with an unkindly and contemptuous eye upon a number of institutions, theological and other, that were then growing up around the University and appropriating some of its time-honoured designations. And he used to say to his young men: "Gentlemen, there are only 'two' classes of persons to whom the term 'Professor' can properly belong. There is the Professor who fills an endowed chair in a University; and there is the Professor of Dancing, who turns on his toes." I fancy the "Orrery Lecturer" was a Lecturer somewhat of the latter order: in English, a showman. The orrery was a "machine constructed for the purpose of exhibiting the motions of the planets round the sun, and of the satellites round their primaries, and was in high repute during the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, though now regarded as a mere toy. Made by Rowley in 1715 at the expense of Charles Boyle, Earl of Orrery, it was a combination of the old Planetarium of the sixteenth century with other machines which showed the motions of the earth, moon, and planetary satellites." For further description, see *Chambers's Encyclopædia*, from which these lines are abstracted. Finally, it is unnecessary to remind the well-informed reader that the Haymarket, Leicester Fields and all that region, has been from the beginning of time the standing-ground of peep-shows, panopticons, playhouses, great and little ("the Little Theatre in Haymarket" everybody has heard of), men with telescopes through which you might see the mountains of the moon, and probably also "Professors" with orreries enabling the curious passenger who would step within—having first paid the higher professorial fee—to contemplate the planets in their courses.

The New Style of Acting

(*Examiner*, 18 July, 1813)

Here again Lamb raises, though not in precise form, a question that has been debated, and will be debated again: How far, namely, the actor should recognise the presence of an audience, the existence of a world at all on the thither side of the footlights. He discussed the point later in the Essay on "Stage Illusion," with more precision and subtlety than he does here; where, indeed, he seems to have no other object than to call attention to a characteristic of Miss Kelly's acting: her unconsciousness of the audience, her fidelity to the solitude of the scene. The praises of Miss Kelly were a topic of the time with Lamb, as the reader will presently see. She was a frequent visitor to the house in Russell Street and, says Talfourd, "charmed the circle there by the heartiness of her manners, the delicacy and gentleness of her remarks, and her unaffected sensibility, as much as she had done on the stage." One member of the circle, if all tales be true, she charmed to the point of imprudence. See Note to "Barbara S." (vol. i. of this edition, p. 348), where the editorial opinion is, however, subject to amendments which shall appear presently.

Of the other theatrical folk referred to here, some are scarcely names to-day, and the dates of their births and deaths would not be informing.

Of Parsons, Dodd, and Bannister, something more rememberable may be learned from *The Essays of Elia*. Miss Pope was another favourite, though she does not seem to have been a familiar like Miss Kelly. "Miss Candour" is evidently a misprint for Mrs. Candour, a part which Miss Pope created and to which he refers in a memorable passage of the Essay on "The Artificial Comedy of the Last Century." "Charming natural Miss Pope," he says, "the perfect gentlewoman as distinguished from the fine lady of comedy." Mrs. Abington, and of course Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Oldfield, were before his day: "Miss Farren had succeeded to Mrs. Abington in Lady Teazle when I first saw the *School for Scandal*," he says.

Play-house Memoranda

(*Examiner*, 19 December, 1813; *Indicator*, 13 December, 1819)

This is one of the earliest of the Essays in which Lamb finds literary material in his own personal recollections and experience. It thus preludes to the *Essays of Elia* both series; and into that upper region the two autobiographical passages which it contains were subsequently translated; so receiving what we may consider their apotheosis. In "My First Play" the reader will recognise (vol. i. of this edition, p. 113) some sentences from this earlier description of the memorable visit to the theatre when "I heard the word Darius, and I was in the midst of Daniel." In a still later Elian Essay, that entitled "Old China," he will find the gladness and glory of the old gallery-going days ("when we were not quite so rich") vindicated, in pages through which we can almost hear the gentle, eager, woman-voice of Bridget Elia—just ever so little passionate now, for the sake of the old loves and the old life, which somebody at the other side of the fireplace was disparaging.

The "Mr. C." whom the good folk from the country were disappointed of seeing was doubtless George Frederick Cooke. Having mistaken their House, they were surely right in trying to mistake their Man also, and so to save the situation from sheer ruin. They had come far, and had a long way to go back.

Miss Burrell as "Don Giovanni"

(*Examiner*, 22 November, 1818)

Miss Burrell also was an occasional visitor to Russell House (as Lamb called the floor which he rented above a brazier's shop), and is spoken of by Talfourd as one of the three "chief favourites" of this time, the other two being Miss Kelly and Munden. According to Talfourd, it was on the occasion of her playing "Don Giovanni" that Lamb discovered her, and probably this article, thereupon incontinently written, made the beginning of the personal acquaintance. She was "a lady of more limited powers" than Miss Kelly, "but with a frank and noble style. . . . She soon married a person named Gold, and disappeared from the stage," and apparently also from the Lamb circle.

In the disgust expressed at "Leporello's brutal display of the list," and still more at the pleasure which audiences derive from that "insult to feminine unhappiness," we have a true bit of the essential Charles Lamb. The passage might be compared with a good many others, but I will only refer the reader to "Modern Gallantry" (vol. i. of this edition, p. 92) and to the *Indicator* paper on "Old Maids," which I believe to be by Lamb, and which appears in vol. ii., page 67.

Miss Kelly at Bath

(*Examiner*, 7 and 8 February, 1819)

This was a letter written to Lamb's old friend John Matthew Gutch, who inserted it in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* (30 January, 1819), of which he was at that time editor or proprietor. A week later the article was reproduced by Leigh Hunt in the *Examiner*, with the following very characteristic introductory remarks: "The reader, we are sure, will thank us for extracting the following observations on a favourite actress, from a provincial paper, the *Bristol Journal*. We should have guessed the masterly and cordial hand that wrote them had we met with it in the

East Indies. There is but one praise belonging to Miss Kelly which it has omitted, and which it could not supply;—and that is, that she has had finer criticism written upon her than any performer that ever trode the stage." And I may remark here, that while there is much talk in the air at present about internal evidence and external evidence for Lamb's authorship of this and that, I know of no evidence on such matters stronger than this—than the way, namely, in which Leigh Hunt speaks of it. The most dogmatic editor must often doubt; but the present editor is never in any doubt as to whether it is Charles Lamb or another that Hunt is referring to in some passage where no names are mentioned and perhaps not ten words spoken.

"Our old play-going days." In the Memoir, prefixed to vol. ii. of the Macdonald edition, the reader will find (p. lvii.) some account of Lamb's brief part-tenancy of Mr. Gutch's premises in Southampton Buildings. It is at this time that he talks of having resolved to take "what snatches of pleasure we can between the acts of our distressful drama"; and perhaps visits to the theatre with his friend Gutch were amongst the most helpful of these just then. For it was a dark time.

For the footnote at p. 204, the editor of the *Examiner* is responsible.

"The Jovial Crew"

(*Examiner*, 4 and 5 July, 1819)

About a forgotten play and forgotten players, this paper prolongs the strain of Miss Kelly's praises with some charming variations, and with one particular grace-note near the end that rings curiously and awakes our vigilance. The concluding exclamation is a true Elian outburst, and the reader may be reminded that just about this moment was written the Sonnet in which Elia (not yet baptised, however) asks indignantly:

> "Who first invented work, and bound the free
> And holyday-rejoicing spirit down
> To ever-haunting importunity
> Of business in the green fields, and the town—
> To plough, loam, anvil, spade—and oh! most sad
> To that dry drudgery at the desk's dead wood?
> Who but"——

Briefly, who but the Devil; of whom, unlike a pious old lady of my acquaintance, he had nothing good to say. Nor had he anything good to say of the Society for the Suppression of Mendicity, either here or in the Essay on "The Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis," vol. i., p. 228.

"He was in excellent fooling." Here I have ventured on a conjectural emendation, and have ventured, I believe, wrongly. It is certain that Lamb meant to quote, and the true form, in the passages of Shakespeare which he had in mind, is certainly "fooling" and not "foolery." Now though Lamb often misquotes, indeed usually misquotes, yet [thus did the Editorial Mind argue this matter], an instance like this would indicate "ignorance of the phrase" rather than mere "misquotation." Such "ignorance of the phrase" is not to be believed of Lamb. Far more likely that the Intelligent Compositor had been at work, and that his work had passed undetected; or else that he had erred, without any effort of intelligence, through the similarity of the words "fooling" and "foolery" in almost anybody's handwriting. So in passing the sheets of this volume for press, I restored "fooling," as being almost certainly the word that Lamb had written. But I have since noticed that he elsewhere says "good foolery" where he ought to have said "good fooling": this in the *Essays of Elia*, which were very carefully corrected. Which brings us upon an interesting question: What edition of Shakespeare did Lamb habitually use? The book is now in America; and probably an inspection of it would show that the text of *Twelfth Night* (where the *loci classici* of this phrase are found) there gave "foolery," in some instances at least, where modern texts give "fooling." Let me add that the only other instance, in the course of this volume, in which I have departed in the slightest degree from the printed authorities (with the exception of once or twice a comma supplied) is in the word "a-gipseying" on the next page; where I have interposed the hyphen in the interests of usage and charm. We shall want to look at the word again, which is an additional reason for making it beautiful.

"The Hypocrite"

(*Examiner*, 1 and 2 August, 1819)

This was a *Play from Molière* at several removes, being a modernisation of Cibber's *Nonjuror*, which had been (in 1706) an adaptation—to contemporary English life, ideas, politics, and religious hatreds—of *Tartuffe*. The reference to Whitefield is confusing a little. He was not, of course, introduced on the stage in 1819, but had been at earlier times, and was constantly made a mark for public derision by Foote. Most people have read how Whitefield, in describing the security and bliss of the heavenly life awaiting the faithful, broke away magnificently: "There, there an ungodly Foote tramples on the Saints no more!" The Countess of Huntingdon made Whitefield one of her chaplains, and the part she played in furthering the great eighteenth-century Revival belongs to the religious history of England.

"The most diabolical of her sex that we ever knew." I have little doubt that this is Mrs. Godwin, who seems to have been as dollish and ingratiating in manner as she was "petted" and prying in temper and mind. She was probably the only human being whom Lamb ever disliked, but he disliked her with considerable heartiness. Very explicit assurance of this may be read in the *Letters*, and there are a number of latent references to her in the works; as here, and in another place where he says, "The most prying, scandal-loving and ill-tempered woman that I know, or ever did know, has been twice married." Her proneness to pass from a momentary pout of displeasure or disappointment into a fixed sulk, likely to last for ever, is indicated very unmistakably by Godwin's letters to her; and was probably the reason of her being called by Lamb, and apparently by other friends of her husband, the Bad Baby. Her more pleasing manner is touched upon ever so lightly by Mary Lamb in a passage in *Mrs. Leicester's School*. We shall meet her again in vol. ii.

"The subtil gradations of hypocrisy." This finely discriminated account of Dowden's acting ought to be compared with the later description of the methods of another artist: the Liar of the "Old Margate Hoy" (vol. i., pp. 209–10).

"To yield or refuse assent with a noble sincerity." Really, one cannot help wondering! There is something about this passage peculiarly "dragged in," peculiarly "led up-to" and intended. We cannot make much of the first part of the paragraph, or see what the writer would be at, until we reach this second part; for the sake of which it seems to have been written. Nor does it seem to issue naturally from that context, but to have a context of its own in certain matters of private knowledge, in a certain mutual understanding, between the critic and the lady whom he praises. Is it possible, we ask, that Miss Kelly had lately—"carrying the same cordial manners into private life"—really refused assent to Somebody's proposals with the "noble sincerity" which Somebody professes to admire? There does not seem to be much relish or gaiety, not much abandonment to the joy of the thing, in this admiration. And in the next paper, which seems to have been rather thrust upon Leigh Hunt unexpectedly, we shall come upon something that will make us ask again, and that may even embolden us to give a pretty confident answer. But without going further than just here, one may say this at least: that if Charles Lamb never asked Miss Kelly to marry him, who can wonder that, with souvenirs like these in her book of cuttings, she fell to dreaming, in the course of ages, that he had done so?

New Pieces at the Lyceum

(*Examiner*, 8 and 9 August, 1819)

Here again we have names, names; and especially the name of Miss Kelly. With regard to it, something has been said in the preceding Note. In an earlier Note I have said something about the very marked way in which Leigh Hunt always refers to Lamb; and a very good instance is afforded by his editorial paragraph, introductory to this criticism:

"We must make the public acquainted with a hard case of ours.—Here had we been writing a long elaborate, critical, and analytical account of the new pieces at the Lyceum, poring over the desk for two hours in the morning after a late night, and melting away what little had been

left of our brains and nerves from the usual distillation of the week, when an impudent rogue of a friend, whose most daring tricks and pretences carry as good a countenance with them as virtues in any other man, and who has the face, above all, to be a better critic than ourselves, sends us the following remarks of his own on those two very pieces. What are we to do? The self-love of your inferior critic must vent itself somehow; and so we take this opportunity of showing our virtue at the expense of our talents, and fairly making way for the interloper.

"Dear, nine closely-written octavo pages! you were very good after all, between you and me; and should have given way to nobody else. If there is room left, a piece of you shall be got in at the end; for virtue is undoubtedly its own reward, but not quite."

I think one may, without being guilty of a too cynical asperity, read between the lines of this and say: that the arrival of Lamb's article was an unexpected and not altogether welcome reinforcement of the strength of the newspaper on this occasion. The respect in which Leigh Hunt held Lamb was absolute, and we see how he praises him even in a moment of what we may call pain: the pain of a very good literary man on finding that a very nice piece of work, which it had cost him something to produce, has been rendered superfluous by the uncovenanted and rather ill-timed industry of a better literary man still, and a dear friend. And we feel that, all compliments notwithstanding, it is not so much to the better man as to the dear friend that Leigh Hunt gives way. But even at that, he cannot deny himself the satisfaction, the mild revenge, of letting it be known that he "has" given way. There are, in fact, the traces of just ever so little irritation, ever so little annoyance, to be found in the above editorial and friendly passage, and we feel sure that Charles Lamb was the only man at whose hands Leigh Hunt would have endured this prank. At the same time it is unlikely, because uncharacteristic, that Lamb would have suffered his friend to make this sacrifice had not the circumstances been exceptional and had he not wanted this article to go in for reasons of peculiar significance and intimacy. This article, shall we say, embodied a very particular kind of good thing, a very topical happy thought, which he did not want to be lost, and which must have its chance —"its show," in modern slang—then or never. So he either brought the article along to Leigh Hunt, and used a little gentle pressure (his not withdrawing the thing voluntarily on finding that Hunt had already written up that subject, would be pressure enough, "between such friends,") or he sent it along with a note making Leigh Hunt feel that he particularly wanted this article to appear. For what reason? I think we find the reason most eloquently set forth in a passage which rings curiously even when read without reference to any other context. "Miss Kelly we do not care to say anything about, because we have been accused of flattering her. The truth is, this lady puts so much intelligence and good sense into every part which she plays, that there is no expressing an honest sense of her merits, without incurring a suspicion of that sort. "But what have we to gain by praising Miss Kelly?" Alas, what indeed! if Miss Kelly carries the same cordial manners into private life and refuses assent with a noble sincerity. And why is it that our dramatic criticism in the *Examiner* now stops so suddenly? Altogether, if I had had this article in mind when writing the Notes to vol. ii., the Note upon "Barbara S——" would, I am afraid, have been written differently.

Finally, the reader may now care to go back to page 54, where he may have been struck by a certain curious and exceedingly headlong way of expressing one's artistic esteem for a public person like Miss Kelly: "What a lass that were to go a-gipseying through the world with!" To be sure, the gallant aspiration was uttered by "a stranger who sate beside us." And we know that he was a stranger; for does not the stranger himself tell us at page 56 that he "has not the pleasure of being acquainted with her"? Thus, then, it would seem that all the stages of this little drama have had their memorial passages, their commemorative niches, in these by-places of Lamb's works any time those eighty years, though no one till now has peered closely enough into the chiaro-oscuro to notice them: all, from the moment of taking his courage in both hands to dare the question—on to the moment, when with ruefulness, but not without humour still, he lets the world know that *he*, alas! has nothing to gain by praising Miss Kelly.

Mr. Kean's "Hamlet"

(*New Times*, 28 August, 1820)

I have included this upon internal evidence; and the more readily because the conception of Hamlet's character here expressed bears upon some aspects of Lamb's own character so closely, that the article would be well worth quoting on that account alone, and merely as an illustration. The facts in favour of the notion that it is by Lamb are these. (1) It is markedly unlike the other dramatic criticisms in the *New Times* and very much superior in all respects. (2) It has a number of touches which the reader will not fail to note as being peculiarly Lamb-like. (3) Lamb was writing for the *New Times* at this time. (4) There is only one other man whom I can think of as having possibly written it; namely, Talfourd. But Talfourd was deeply immersed in his legal concernments and duties at this period, and I do not find that he was ever associated with the *New Times* at all; whereas we know that Lamb was. And there are one or two passages here which have that note of authority, that note, almost, of defiance which was not much in Talfourd's way (who trod a very flowery path in criticism), but which was a good deal in the way of Charles Lamb: see this volume, *passim*.

But what struck me most on first reading the article, and weighed most with me in deciding to include it, was the parallelism between the character of Hamlet, as it is here presented, and the character—or a great part of the character—of Charles Lamb as I view it. *He* also was a man of exquisite sensibility, of a fretted and alert and distracting temperament, with a mind that moved perilously from point to point to elude the thoughts which else would have fastened upon him and become an obsession and a madness. I felt at once on reading this paper that it was either written by Lamb or by someone whose apprehensions had been awakened and informed by familiar acquaintance with him. If written by Lamb, then it is an instance of a kind of autobiographic writing which is worthy of a good deal of study: an example, namely, of that self-portraiture which is sometimes achieved (and not quite unconsciously achieved, not quite without intention) when sensitive and mobile souls try to project their impressions of other souls with whom they are in sympathy. They write of what they know; but they speak the truth about a character by reading something into it; they place "there," and fondly give emphasis to, just what they find within themselves. *Du gleichst dem Geist den du begreifst* ("Thou art like the spirit thou canst understand") says the Earth-Spirit to Faust; and it is a truth of enormous reach, which might be traced far through literature. And a notable example may be found elsewhere in this volume. For who can read Lamb's description of Robert Lloyd (p. 273) without feeling that the whole paper is as much a description of the writer as of the friend he praises? He praises that friend by attributing to him (not wrongly, but yet in a degree beyond what the other ever dreamt of possessing) those characters of gentleness, and affection, and loyalty, ("it seemed as if the affectionate part of his nature could suffer no abatement") and of a genius restrained, so to say, by its own quick fulness and sensitiveness and consideration for others—characters which were strong in Robert Lloyd, no doubt, but which were also very strong, perhaps stronger still, in Charles Lamb. And how, indeed, could he better praise his friend than by crediting him with those beauties and sweetnesses of disposition and nature which he himself most cared for, and desired, and reached towards, without ever telling himself directly that they were already so largely his own?

Nevertheless, when all is said, Talfourd may well have written this paper on "Hamlet."

The Old Actors

(*London Magazine*, February 1822)

This was the opening paragraph of the second of Lamb's articles under the above title in the *London*. In preparing these Essays for re-publication, he re-arranged the contents (bringing together passages which had originally not appeared in the same paper), discarded portions, and gave new titles to the Essays; namely, "On Some of the Old Actors"; "On the Artificial Comedy of Last Century"; and "On the Acting of Munden." It is worth reprinting separately; for though it is but a roll-call of names,

it is a very animated one, and has some great memorable passing phrases —"the Woffington (a true Hogarth) upon a couch, dallying and dangerous" —"Miss Pope, a gentlewoman ever, to the verge of ungentility, with Churchill's compliment still burnishing upon her gay Honeycomb lips"— "the collective majesty of the whole Kemble family"—"and (Shakspeare's woman) Dora Jordan." There are not, I well believe, three hundred Essays in the world which are, singly and severally, each of them as good, as strong with the life of literature, as any of those phrases.

"The matchless Highgate Collection" was that of Charles Mathews the Elder, who moved into his famed Ivy Cottage, in Kentish Town, in 1819. There he had a Gallery built to receive the Collection of Theatrical Portraits, the gathering of which was the hobby of his life and its main extravagance. His widow complains that he had so enriched his house with these treasures that he could not afford to live in it, or find time to enjoy them: he had to be all over the country making money, long after his labours ought to have been done, in order to meet the expenses of this annexe to his establishment. The pictures are now the property of the Garrick Club, and chief amongst many valued possessions there.

John Kemble and Godwin's "Antonio"

(*London Magazine*, April 1822)

This formed the conclusion of the Essay "On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century," as it first appeared in the magazine; and followed immediately upon the words with which that Essay now ends. The lopping of so considerable a portion of so matterful a paper was more probably done in the interests of unity and effect than out of any fear that Godwin would be hurt by seeing the memory of a painful fiasco perpetuated in the books of Elia. We know, in fact, that he valued this famous account of the damnation of his tragedy, and kept the Essay among his more important papers. Nor need Lamb—except for appearance' sake and "purposes of publication"—have made so wide a guess at Godwin's motive for turning playwright. His motive was every other playwright's motive—he wanted to make money: of which he was unusually apt to be in need, even for a philosopher. Nobody but a philosopher, however, would have been foolish enough to court fate as he did on this occasion. For, using the leverage of a promise given him by Sheridan (who was then the proprietor of Drury Lane Theatre) he practically coerced Kemble, who was manager as well as leading actor, into producing the play and undertaking the title part: a play for which Kemble persistently foretold failure, from his first acquaintance with it, up to the fatal hour of its production; and a part for which he expressed the strongest distaste and dislike. The history of the affair is rather fully recorded: in Lamb's letters, in this paper, and in Mr. Kegan Paul's *Life of Godwin*. Lamb had contributed a good deal of criticism and suggestion while the drama was in the making (see this vol., p. 365) and furnished it with an Epilogue, which he fancied greatly himself. In this way he became a sharer in the comprehensive damnation of the evening; "a prologue and epilogue," said the *Morning Post* of 15 December, 1800, "were spoken by Mr. C. Kemble and Miss Heard—both productions well suited to the piece, too bad to pass without censure except when they pass without observation."

The "M——" referred to here is Marshall, loyallest and most unselfish of friends to Godwin, and a man for whom Lamb, without knowing him very intimately, had an abounding respect and liking. And he liked his *bête noire* the Bad Baby all the less because even Marshall did not escape the operations by which she managed to alienate all her husband's friends who could be alienated, or at least driven away. Lamb tells how, after the performance, this Marshall and he "hurried the Professor"—so he called Godwin—"off to my house to supper; and there we comforted him as best we could."

A Passage in "The Tempest"

(*London Magazine*, November 1823)

This conjectural explanation of a rather plain puzzle must be regarded, I think, as an example of the perverse ingenuity which Lamb was quite capable of expending upon things that did not matter one way or the other.

If they "had" mattered, he would not have been perverse, but entirely right-minded and, in spite of appearances, rigorously sensible. The pleasure of finding an application for a bit of quaint reading must have tempted him sorely: to say nothing of having an excuse for sending the said bit of quaint reading to the magazine. But however the passage in *The Tempest* may have set him, and others since, wondering in the innocence of their infancy, very few have continued to wonder all their days what was the "one thing that she did" for which the folk of Argier would not take the life of Sycorax. A correspondent in the December number of the magazine gave it its Shakespearian name: "the deed of kind." And if the considerations which prompted the sparing of pregnant women do not seem to us to extend naturally to witches in the like condition, that is owing to a rather curious psychological difference which is worth pointing out: namely that, just because we do not believe in witchcraft now, the concept of the witch has become de-humanised, and she is further from the pale of our sympathies than she was from the sympathies of those who believed in her and burned her. For they might hate her and fear her, but they recognised an identity of nature with their own: she was not for them, as for us, a kind of lesser Supernatural Being, but a particular kind of bad woman, a next-door neighbour who had sinned a special sin: the sin of keeping the worst of bad company, of associating with the Devil, of being "in league with the Enemy." But a woman she remained, a limited human being, however worthy of the stake by reason of her sin; and the brand with which she was marked was, after all, not so much blacker, nor so much hotter, than that reserved for the woman who was convicted of the sin of loving, not the Devil, but merely the wrong man.

Biographical Memoir of Mr. Liston

(*London Magazine*, January 1825)

To a person who once explained, with some pride, that he was a matter-of-fact man, Lamb replied that, for "his" part, he claimed to be a matter-of-lie man. It was in this independent and enterprising character that he wrote the Biography of Liston. It was a very long thing of its kind, and therefore—"Of all the lies I ever put off, I value this most. It is from top to toe, every paragraph, pure invention, and has passed for gospel; has been republished in newspapers, and in the penny play-bills of the night, as an authentic account." This to Miss Hutchinson, on 20 January. Talfourd speaks of Liston as one who "occasionally enlivened Lamb's evening parties with his society; and who, besides the interest which he derived from his theatrical fame, was recommended to Lamb by the cordial admiration which he expressed for Munden." There is more "learning," real or simulated, in this than Lamb ever put into anything except the "Curious Fragments"; and no doubt there was a good deal of allusiveness which is lost to us, who know less about Liston than about either Munden or Elliston.

Autobiography of Mr. Munden

(*London Magazine*, February 1825)

Lamb seems to have taken more delight, upon the whole, in Munden than in any other stage celebrity (always excepting Miss Kelly) of his generation. Yet he did not, as he points out, include Munden among his Old Actors, nor did he consider him, in the proper sense, an actor at all, but a preternaturally endowed artist in facial expression and physical bearing. See "On the Acting of Munden" in vol. i. and the paper "On the Death of Munden" in this volume. As to this hoax, we may enjoy it, but can hardly pretend to understand, at this time of day, how such instances of intimate and personal joking as this and the "Memoir of Mr. Liston" were possible in a great magazine like the *London*. Certainly there was more good humour in the world then; and the world being a smaller world, that good humour better sufficed to meet the claims upon it than the present-day stock does or could do.

One might suppose that the manner of this paper was in its entirety a reminiscence of some stage character (perhaps Old Dosey) with which the actor was identified. But Leigh Hunt says, "Munden he made [in this

Essay] born at Stoke Poges; the very sound of which was like the actor speaking and digging his words." From which we may gather that the skit was pretty close and personal.

The Religion of Actors

(*New Monthly Magazine*, April 1826)

The circumstance of the moment which prompted the writing of this article is not very discernible now. Perhaps it was the tumult of outraged moralists who made themselves heard at Drury Lane when Kemble —fresh from a suit for criminal conversation which Mr. Cox, a banker, gold-refiner, and alderman of the City of London, had successfully brought against him—had the temerity to appear in the not very ingratiating part of "Richard III.," at the beginning of 1825. The riotousness of the respectable population lasted nightly for some weeks: and it continued to meet the great tragedian for months after, in the provinces, in Scotland, and in America. Or it may be that Braham, the tenor, had at this time (1826) made some kind of public declaration, or protest, against some newspaper reference which seemed to imply that he was a Jew of the Synagogue. He had, in the words of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "conformed to the Church of England," but this conformity must have been effected some years earlier; for already in the Essay "Imperfect Sympathies" (August 1821) Lamb had referred to him in these terms: "B—— would have been more in keeping if he had abided by the faith of his forefathers. There is a fine scorn in his face, which nature meant to be of —— Christians. The Hebrew spirit is strong in him, in spite of his proselytism. He cannot conquer the Shibboleth." Nevertheless, he begat a son—without the consent of the law or the lady's father—who became an Anglican clergyman; so there can be no doubt as to his conformity.

Of the many personal allusions here, only two really need be explained. "The process of sanctity begun under the happy auspices of the present licenser." The improving person referred to was John Colman the Younger; and a few graceful sentences from the *Dictionary of National Biography* will put the reader in possession of the editor's entire stock of knowledge regarding this matter. "His conduct in the post [of Examiner of Plays] has subjected him to not unreasonable condemnation. Himself the author of some of the least decent publications of his day, he showed himself squeamish beyond precedent in the task of censor, his proceedings being at once tyrannical, futile, and rapacious. Not only did he cut out all reference to the deity, every form of prayer or hymn, and even such modified forms of apostrophe as 'O Lord!' and 'demmee!' but he objected to the use of words such as 'heaven' and 'providence,' and would not even allow a lover to address his mistress as an 'angel.' When examined in 1832 before a committee of the House of Commons appointed to inquire into the state of dramatic literature, he with apparent seriousness defended this preposterous severity."

"From whichever cause this *excessus in terminis* proceeded." I assume in the typical reader of Lamb either a smattering of Latin, or the kind of intelligence which can get on very well without it. But apparently it is not safe to assume either this or that nowadays, even in his editors. *Excessus in terminis* has lately been explained to mean—"Death at the goal!" On this principle a foreigner may one day explain to his compatriots that "passing along Oxford Street" means "Taking a mile and a half to die." For to be sure any good school dictionary will tell him that one of the meanings of "passing" is "death": as *The Passing of Arthur*. There are immense possibilities in this kind of scholarship, and it has the recommendation of dispensing with the schoolmaster entirely. *Excessus in terminis*, however, means only an excessiveness or too muchness in the term used: the term carrying a greater weight of meaning, having a more particular connotation, than the argument requires. It is obviously a technical phrase from the old scholastic logic or rhetoric books: and appears to be the equivalent of what is now called the Fallacy of the Illicit Process, or unlawful proceeding (=excess) of the major or minor term in a syllogism. There is a (smaller) suspicion of technicality about *ex abundanti* also, but it may in any case be translated "More than there's any need for."

"Some . . . report, that Mr. T——y. . . ." Daniel Terry, the actor, manager, and playwright, or rather adapter. He is here said to belong to

the Kirk of Scotland, in allusion to his close association with Sir Walter Scott, both in business and friendship. He adapted a whole catalogue of Scott's novels and poems to the stage; and it was on the eve of one of those "productions" that Sir Walter said he was getting Terryfied. But Sir Walter had an enormous respect for Terry, who is "traditionally" remembered in Scotland to this day.

"The two great bodies"=the Drury Lane and Covent Garden Companies, domiciled respectively in the parishes aforesaid. Perhaps, by the way, Elliston is guessed to be a Muggletonian because the touch of the ultra-commonplace and the vulgarly-hideous in the sound of the name is in happy contrast with the classic pretensions and the elevated style of the great actor. See Note upon "Elliston" in vol. i., p. 345.

Shakspeare's Improvers

(*Spectator*, 22 November, 1828)

This paper was first exhumed by Canon Ainger, who, however, naturally buried it again in a Note. At p. 190 of this volume, also pp. 192–4, will be found an earlier word of good hostile intention upon the present theme: the sins of Dryden, Cibber, Garrick and the other improvers or disguisers of Shakespeare.

The Death of Munden

(*Athenæum*, 11 February, 1832)

The reader who compares this paper with the Essay "On the Acting of Munden" in vol. i., pp. 192–4, and then reads the criticism by "a gentleman who attends less to these things than formerly," will not fail to see that the said gentleman (Thomas Noon Talfourd, to wit) had a general conception of Munden's characteristics and power as an actor, very remote from the conception of Charles Lamb on the same matter. Here is the criticism, of which Lamb sent a cutting to the *Athenæum*.

"Mr. Munden appears to us to be the most 'classical' of actors. He is that in high farce, which Kemble was in high tragedy. The lines of these great artists are, it must be admitted, sufficiently distinct—but the same elements are in both—the same directness of purpose, the same singleness of aim, the same concentration of power, the same iron casing of inflexible manner, the same statue-like precision of gesture, movement and attitude. The hero of farce is as little affected with impulses from without, as the retired Prince of Tragedians. There is something solid, sterling, almost adamantine in the building up of his most grotesque characters. When he fixes his wonder-working face in any of its most amazing varieties, it looks as if the picture were carved out from a rock, by Nature in a sportive vein, and might last for ever. It is like what we can imagine a mask of the old Grecian Comedy to have been, only that it lives, and breathes, and changes.—His most fantastical gestures are the grand ideal of farce. He seems as though he belonged to the earliest and the stateliest age of Comedy, when instead of superficial foibles and the airy varieties of fashion, she had the grand asperities of man to work on, when her grotesque images had something romantic about them, and when humour and parody were themselves heroic. His expressions of feeling and bursts of enthusiasm are among the most genuine which we have ever felt. They seem to come up from a depth of emotion in the heart, and burst through the sturdy casing of manner with a strength which seems increased tenfold by its real and hearty obstacle. The workings of his spirit seem to expand his frame, till we can scarcely believe that by measure it is small; for the space which he fills in the imagination is so real that we almost mistake it for that of corporal dimensions. His "Old Dosey," in the excellent farce of *Past Ten o'Clock*, is his grandest effort of this kind, and we know of nothing finer. He seems to have a 'heart of oak' indeed. His description of a sea-fight is the most noble and triumphant piece of enthusiasm which we remember. It is as if the spirits of a whole crew of nameless heroes 'were swelling in his bosom.' We never felt so ardent and proud a sympathy with the valour of England as when we heard it. May health long be his, thus to do our hearts good—for we never saw any actor whose merits have the least resemblance to his even in

species: and when his genius is withdrawn from the stage, we shall not have left even a term by which we can fitly describe it.

"T. N. T."

The hand which wrote this criticism is unmistakably the hand that wrote the paper "Munden's Farewell," which has been included among Lamb's works by more than one editor. It is well worth noting, too, that when Lamb pasted this article on the "Death of Munden" into his album or scrap-book, he was careful to "cut away and entirely omit" the paragraph from Talfourd. Yet this same album is packed with other extract-matter besides cuttings and autograph copies of Lamb's own articles and poems; and contains, for instance, De Quincey's famous passage on the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth*. We may therefore regard it as very significant that he should have snipped off from this particular contribution the appended matter which expressed the view of a very favourite friend regarding a very favourite actor. But the truth is, it was a view which he considered fluid, expansive, inexact, and which really contradicted his own doctrine on the subject.

On the Custom of Hissing at the Theatres

(*Reflector*, No. iii., 1811)

In letters to Manning, Wordsworth, and Sarah Stoddart, Lamb has told the story of his "cursed fall from off the top of Drury-lane Theatre into the pit"; and some phrases of these letters lingered long enough in his memory to find their way into this Essay five years later. *Mr. H.* was produced and damned on 10 December, 1806: for further particulars regarding the disaster.

The Vindictive Man was a play by Lamb's friend Holcroft, which had been damned in the same house about three weeks earlier. In a letter to Manning, dated 5 December, 1806, he gives an account of its failure and a very keen analysis of the causes thereof. One of those was curious. The playwright had brought again upon the scene a character from his own earlier play, *The Road to Ruin*; but he forgot to consider that as *The Vindictive Man* was not known to be by the same author as the former (immensely successful) play, the audience would see nothing here but a piece of incredible plagiary, insulting to their intelligence and their knowledge of the scene. Another reason which he gives is glanced at in the present volume, p. 209: it had "no less than eleven principal characters, all men"—the other sex being represented by "one woman and one ——" I have left the word unwritten, because it is a word which is never used nowadays except on devotional occasions. At p. 209 Lamb tells us that "Mrs. Harlow, to do the part justice, chose to play it in scarlet." But he is a little in error, for there was another, and a better, specimen of womankind in the piece.

"The O.P. differences" are more usually denominated "Riots." The occasion was the issue by Kemble of a revised (and increased) scale of prices for admission, on the opening of the New Covent Garden Theatre in 1809. For a good three months the pit was thronged nightly with people who would suffer nothing to be heard but the sound of their own voices shouting "O.P! O.P.!" (Old prices! old prices!) The management in the end gave way.

On the Genius and Character of Hogarth

(*Reflector*, No. iii., 1811)

Shakespeare, or Hogarth—it would be hard to say which of those two did most to form the character and to inform the intelligence of Charles Lamb. His sympathy with Hogarth has at any rate more of originality and genius in it than has his admiration for Shakespeare; and I believe it dates from an earlier time. The "capital prints which hung upon the walls of a great hall in an old-fashioned house in ——shire." are elsewhere mentioned in his works, and the old-fashioned house was, of course, Blakesware. And in later days some "capital prints" that hung upon his own walls, and that went with him in all migrations, were amongst the most valued of his possessions, yielding to no folio in dearness. Lamb's

enthusiasm for Hogarth is, curiously enough, more nearly related to his "respect for intellect" than is his admiration for Shakespeare; perhaps because he had to vindicate Hogarth against the belittlements of fools. Consequently this paper is interesting also as the outstanding example of Charles Lamb's pugnacity. For it is extremely pugnacious; the pugnacity of the gentle nature, which is not fond of fighting and therefore fights all the more fiercely—knowing that its heart may fail at any moment! He seems to me here just like a "very" nice young fellow come into a fray, not very sure that he has any right to be there, but hitting out, head down. Every one who reads this Essay ought to read also Hazlitt's more metaphysical, more analytic, study; and if he reads nothing else that has been written on the subject since, he will not have lost much. Everything is in those two master-pieces by two master-critics who knew each other so well and honoured each the gifts of the other so highly.

There is nothing that properly asks for explanation here. But the reader may be reminded that in a passage at p. 244 ("there is more of imagination in it—the power which draws all things to one") there is an implicit reference to Coleridge. For if the *Biographia Literaria* has any one thread of connection running through it—appearing and disappearing like a *Leitmotif*, as fugitive as the subject of a fugue—it is the hunt after a fuller definition of "Imagination, or the Esemplastic Power": Esemplastic being a coinage or composition of Coleridge's from three Greek words (ἐς into, ἕν one, πλάσσειν to mould) and signifying "that which moulds into One."

The Reynolds Gallery

(*Examiner*, 6 June, 1813)

There were three good reasons why Lamb should not have been impressed by that immense social success of Reynolds which has been mistaken for an absolute achievement in art. (1) He was a friend of William Hazlitt, (2) He was a praiser of Hogarth, (3) He was a masterly art critic on his own strength. That he should have had so pronounced and particular an admiration for Leonardo da Vinci is curious rather than strange, and affords what might be the subject of an interesting paper, if only somebody would write it. The main part of the explanation might be found, I think, in what is common to Leonardo and Hogarth, at their vast distances apart: namely, the full-charged psychology of their portraiture. It seems a wild thing to say, but Leonardo is a classical Hogarth, a Hogarth in whom infinite idiosyncrasy and experience lurks, as it were, in a low relief of beauty: the beauty itself so intellectual, so subtle, so talented and so proud, that it mocks your admiration, even while you gaze on it, as a kind of fatuity. The ten thousand particularities, accidentals, grotesques which he drew in a lifetime of practice and studies have all been absorbed in the one beauty of the Monna Lisa; and they may be caught grinning at you out of it. To put it otherwise, perhaps; if there was a surcharge of sinful and suffering Man in the moral Hogarth, there was in Leonardo an infinite deal of the intellectual living Devil; and, as a humane and right-thinking person, Lamb equally sympathised with the one and respected the other.

"Mrs. Anne Clark; but Kitty Fisher is a considerable personage." They were both what better examples of the virtues of their sex would call "persons," but Mrs. Anne Clark was surely the more considerable personage of the two. For Kitty Fisher, she seems to have been a dashing and notorious individual of her day, rather than a considerable one. Her chief claim to recognition, even by the *Dictionary of National Biography*, consists in the fact that Reynolds painted her portrait more than once for different admirers. In the end she married a Member of Parliament, and in becoming exemplary and domestic, ceased to be remarkable. On the other hand, Mrs. Mary Anne Clark naturally belongs, as mistress of Frederick, Duke of York, to the history of England. As became a person of her importance, she held a very great style of housekeeping and sought to meet the excessive expenses by selling her influence. This led to questions in Parliament, the development of a thrilling "affair," and the appearance of Mrs. Mary Anne, beautiful and audacious, at the bar of the House. In the years following this national event there raged a war to the knife between the favourite and her foes, in which she was the attacking party, and plied them thoroughly with a cannonade of pamphlets,

memoirs, and other such explosives. After a time her silence was purchased at a ransom, and the end was peace: "She finally settled down and devoted herself to the education of her daughters, who all married well." Which shows that if virtue is not its own reward, something else is: beauty, audacity, blackmail, or what you please.

"A portrait of Francis the First by Leonardo da Vinci." There is no portrait, so called, of Francis I. by Leonardo; but a careful reading of the passage shows that what Lamb saw was a picture of John the Baptist. Now there "is" a picture of John the Baptist by Leonardo, which belongs to the period when he was at the Court of Francis and which is now in the Louvre. Conflicting rumours as to who sat to the artist there might be, in this as in other cases, and Lamb might have got hold of the wrong one; but a John the Baptist would still be a John the Baptist, whoever sat. So I got the publishers to procure from Italy a large photograph of this picture; but have finally decided, after some hesitations, to omit it. It answers in every way to the description in the Essay, except that the lamb, which the Baptist is said to caress, has gone astray. What Charles Lamb saw was doubtless some kind of study (probably a large engraving) "after this picture": and the emblem of innocence had been introduced in order to give point and sanction—such as the British Public would understand—to the somewhat dubious, not to say diabolic, fascination of the Saint's expressive smile. It is a curious picture. Looked at close (as it would be looked at in a book) it is the face of a woman, and of an extremely naughty woman: she might be at a window, in the act of alluring somebody from the street below. Held far enough off, so that the parlous subtleties of the eyes and mouth retreat into the general effect, it becomes virile and, in Lamb's word, majestic. Finally, I am inclined to think that Lamb was right, and that Francis I. did sit for this picture; only, he had his beard and whiskers shaved, and he put on a syren wig of "lovely" curls. His face (as may be seen in vol. ii. of Miss Macdonnell's translation of Benvenuto Cellini) was womanish, with rather well-moulded flesh; and to his nose, like that of the saint in this picture, and of Sarah Siddons, there was no end.

Recollections of a Late Royal Academician

(*Englishman's Magazine*, September 1831)

A good deal has been said about this and that article of Lamb's being "offensive" or "obnoxious." As the reader knows, I have not much sympathy with the sensibilities which take offence at a Shakespearean fancy or a work of rather grim humour, like the "Vision of Horns" and the "Confessions of a Drunkard." But if there is any prose work of Lamb's which I don't much care for, it is this. It is not like him; it is unkind. One likes him none the less—rather, one likes him the more; since its faults are due to his very virtues. For it is one of those things, written in the last year or two of his life, in which we detect the "touch of morbidity," the influence of what I have called "the ebb of renovating joy, only too likely, alas! to have befallen him." It is neither offensive nor obnoxious; but there is not in it the touch of sunshine sweetening everything in the end, there is not the heart-feeling of forgiveness, which the Elia of an earlier day would have shed upon the memory even of George Dawe, grubby daubster as he was. But this was a dark time for Charles Lamb; and his friends—to hint at a truth which has never been fully spoken—did wonderfully little for him. However, in all this one is trying the article by a very high standard, the standard of his best and sweetest; and one is thinking, too, of Dawe as an old friend of the Lambs, whereas he was perhaps only an old acquaintance, never much respected. References to him will be found in the early letters; but as he grew richer he seems to have passed out of their circle. For the rest, it would seem that every generation has its decorated Dawes and its neglected Haydons; and Lamb, who knew both, has here written one of those protests which every generation needs to have written for it anew, to recall it to a sense of those everlasting decencies which are always being outraged by the respectabilities of an hour.

Lamb's "facts" here are not in every case according to history; but in any case the matter is not of much consequence.

Specimens from the Writings of Fuller

(*Reflector*, No. iv., 1812)

This was republished in the *Works* (1818) with no alterations save the omission of a footnote, which will be found numbered (4) in the "Fragments of Criticism" at the end of this volume. It is curious that Lamb does not explicitly mention Fuller's excellent gift of punning as one of his merits. But though Fuller did not make a profession of it, he had the gift, and used it sometimes to memorable effect. Thus when Lamb, apostrophising "old Bishop Valentine," says, "Great is thy name in the rubric, thou venerable 'Arch-flamen' of Hymen," he is using an unusual word which had been endeared to his mind by a delicious pun of old Fuller's.

On Robert Lloyd

(*Gentleman's Magazine*, November 1811)

Lamb's acquaintance with the Lloyds began early in 1797, when Charles Lloyd—"An Unexpected Visitor"—came to see him. He and Lloyd afterwards issued a joint volume (*Blank Verse by Charles Lloyd and Charles Lamb*. 1798), and corresponded. Lloyd's hypersensitive and morbid disposition was not a good influence for Lamb, however, who allowed himself to be talked by Lloyd into an unfriendly judgment of his best friend, Coleridge. This led at last to an alienation, which did not endure long, and which was indeed repented in tears by Lamb, who was certainly not in the right, for once. But he always distrusted Charles Lloyd after this, and at a later time had renewed reason to distrust him. But through Charles he made acquaintance with the Lloyd family, who were all talented. In one of the *Letters* he quotes a fine description (by Robert Lloyd) of the father, who was a man of abounding powers and, it would seem, abounding headstrong passion in his character of Governor. But Lamb's special friend, among all the family, was this Robert Lloyd, to whom he wrote perhaps the best of all his "literary" letters. At one time Robert, fleeing from the wrath or at least the repressive rule of his father, came to London and stayed with the Lambs. Of the present paper, I have said something in the Note upon "Mr. Kean's 'Hamlet.'"

"Was but one in a complication of afflictions." This is explained by the opening sentences of the paragraph in which this article originally appeared: "September 12. In his 32nd year, Thomas Lloyd, of Birmingham, merchant, fourth son of Charles Lloyd, Esq., Banker. And on the 15th of October, in her 22nd year, Caroline, fourth daughter of the said Charles Lloyd. The former has left a disconsolate widow and three children." . . . Then follows the reference to Robert's death (he being the third son) in October also. This article was first reprinted by Mr. Lucas, who edited the Lloyd and Lamb matter which was given to the public for the first time in 1898. See *Lamb and the Lloyds*.

Books with One Idea in Them

(*Examiner*, 18 July, 1813; *Indicator*, 13 December, 1820)

The passage from Charron is given in the Notes to another edition. But, except that he was discussing books with "one" idea in them, Lamb need not have gone so far afield. Let me quote part of a passage from a great English classic, a passage in which there is a fine scorn and a play of qualities beyond anything that the monotonous Scarron knew the way to. "Men I find to be a sort of beings very badly constructed, as they are generally more easily provoked than reconciled, more disposed to do mischief to each other than to make reparation, much more easily deceived than undeceived, and having more pride and even pleasure in killing than in begetting one another: for without a blush they assemble in great armies at noon-day to destroy, and when they have killed as many as they can, they exaggerate the number to augment the fancied glory; but they creep into corners, or cover themselves with the darkness of night when they mean to beget, as being ashamed of a virtuous action. A virtuous action it would be, and a vicious one the killing of them, if the species were really worth producing or preserving; but of this I begin to doubt." *The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin*, 1817. Vol. i., p. 108.

Wordsworth's "Excursion"

(*Quarterly Review*, October 1814)

This article is a little famous because of its ill fortunes, and because Lamb was so heartily put out about them. He had himself to blame, however (or rather Southey, who seems to have got him the introduction to the *Quarterly*, and to have urged him to contribute this article), far more than Gifford. Lamb was a new mind in literature, and his writing was a new element in English prose; and neither the one nor the other is a thing that is ever tolerated on its first appearance without protest, or admitted into respectable magazines without mutilation. It has always been so, and will always be so; and those who sneer at Gifford to-day would do to-morrow what Gifford did. Not to Charles Lamb, to be sure (they are too stupid and cowardly to attempt anything so ingenious and enterprising); but to any new writer, who might appear to-morrow or the next day, and who should represent what Lamb represented then—the wider margin won, the new estate added to the kingdom of Letters. The new margin will probably seem to the wise editor (or certainly to his readers, whom he must consider in the matter) a fantastic peculiarity or an excrescence; and he will cut it out. So Gifford naturally cut out a great deal of what was characteristic and excellent in this article, and Lamb was cut up about it; but less on his own account than Wordsworth's. "The 'language' he has altered throughout," wrote Lamb to the Poet, "more than a third of the substance is cut away, and that not all in one place, but *passim*, so as to make utter nonsense. Every warm expression is changed for a nasty cold one"—and this, no doubt, was the cruellest cut of all, to one who intended friendship even more than he intended criticism. There is much more; but the letter in full will be found in its proper place. When all is said, or the worst has been done, the article is well worth having. The gift of style glimmers through in places still, and the light of intelligence is not altogether quenched. It seems particularly luminous where he says that a poet, or any new writer, who would escape denunciation "must timidly coast the shore of prescribed sentiment. He must have just as much more of the imaginative faculty than his readers, as will serve to keep their apprehensions from stagnating, but ' not so much as to alarm their jealousy.'" The wisdom of this is for all time.

On the Poetical Works of George Wither

(*Works*, 1818)

There is quite a literature of commentary concerning this short paper; but as it consists entirely of what may be called textual discussion, it does not come within my plan to deal with it extensively or at all. But the story, in briefest abstract, is this.

John M. Gutch, Lamb's friend and old schoolfellow at Christ's, became proprietor of a newspaper in Bristol (already referred to), and used the presses, in spare time, in the production of Selections from Wither in two volumes. He sent an interleaved copy of the work to Lamb, who wrote pretty extensively on the blank leaves before sending the books back. This was in 1810 or 1811. Some seven years later, when preparing his *Works* for publication, Lamb got Gutch to let him have the books again, as he thought there were in his earlier scribblings the makings of a paper on Wither. He had them back, and the essay, as we now see it, was taken from these blank leaves with wonderfully little alteration. As to the interleaved copy, Gutch seems to have given it to Lamb for good, either then or later; and Lamb gave it in turn to his friend Brook Pulham of the East India House. Finally, it came into the possession of Mr. Swinburne, who now owns it, and who has written of it an exhaustive and interesting account, published first as a *Nineteenth Century* article in 1885 and republished among his *Miscellanies* in the following year. That there should have been scope for a long and interesting account of so small a work is due to another fact in the history of the interleaved copy, which I must now mention:

In the interval between the returning of the book to Gutch and Lamb's having it back, the book had been placed by Gutch in the hands of a Dr. Nott, a friend of his. Nott does not seem to have been quite worthy of his privileges, and he read Lamb's scribblings in the spirit of a pedant—

or rather like the type of man whom Lamb had in view when he wrote his famous description of the Scottish character: a very "true description" of a very "real type," but the type no more distinctively Scottish than it is distinctively Spanish or Chinese. At any rate, Nott being that kind of man, he wrote in the book his comments upon Lamb's comments, and they were such comments as the kind of man would write. When the book came again into Lamb's possession, he read Dr. Nott's comments, and he wrote upon them in return such comments as he would write on that kind of man: things for the most part neither brilliant nor witty, but rather impish and outrageous—or, in the word with which he himself described a similar exercise of his own in 1823, "petulant." He not only went after Dr. Nott, however, like "Ritson" after "Scott," but he sometimes turned aside to better things and wrote a new comment upon Wither. In this superfœtation of comment, then, as Lamb would have called it, does the interest of Mr. Swinburne's curious treasure consist.

Review of "Falstaff's Letters"

(*Examiner*, 5 and 6 September, 1819; *Indicator*, 24 January, 1821)

Of James White, the author of this *jeu-d'esprit*, something has already been said in the Notes to vol. i. He was a schoolfellow of Lamb at Christ's and (in a mild degree) a boon companion in the days before September 1796; and an acquaintance, at least, till his death. But there is a curious passage about him in a letter to Coleridge in January 1798, in which Lamb gives the following reason for not having called oftener on Lloyd while he was in London that winter: "He was living with White, a man to whom I have never been accustomed to impart my "dearest feelings," though from long habits of friendliness, and many a social and good quality, I loved him very much. I met company there—indiscriminate company." As this was the time (1798) when the note of religious seriousness in Lamb was predominant, and the heart very sore besides, we can understand why he did not put himself in the way just then of meeting a good-enough fellow whose gaiety never relaxed; and whose gaiety, as we see, had for its special formula something close akin to what most people would call profanity. But the feelings of '98 wore away, and Lamb always spoke well of White, and praised his book and urged others to praise it, or at least to read it. In the question whether he not only praised it, but partly wrote it, I have never been able to feel much interest. One may say that it is unlikely that White should have had a work of this sort in progress in 1795-6 and Lamb not have a hand in it: also, there are passages where we seem to trace that hand pretty plainly. Upon the whole, however, I think "not." Lamb's interest in the Elizabethans, not excepting Shakespeare, was a plant of later growth than is usually supposed, and humour was not much in his way in 1795. White died not long after the appearance of this article in the *Examiner*; and we do not know that, in the years that followed, Lamb ever commended the book to his friends on the strength of having "assisted" in a small way at its birth. Which (had that been the case) he could have done, and would have done, very genially, without diminishing at all—rather enhancing, indeed—the fame of his friend.

Review of Charles Lloyd's "Nugæ Canoræ"

(*Examiner*, 24 and 25 October, 1819)

Of Lamb's acquaintance with Lloyd, something has already been said. Since the days when Lloyd imperilled the friendship between Lamb and Coleridge, much had happened, and there was forgiveness of old wrongs or errors of the tongue: but—"Never glad confident morning again!" To Lloyd also much had happened, and he had his own portion of calamity: periods of religious monomania, if not of madness. Writing to Miss Hutchinson in 1815, Lamb says: "Poor C. Lloyd and poor Priscilla! I feel I hardly feel enough for him; my own calamities press about me and involve me in a thick integument . . . but I feel all I can, all the kindness I can, towards you all. God bless you!" When this book was published, Lloyd's mind had recovered a healthier tone, and he had returned to London: consequently, he was known to Talfourd, in whose Memoir of

Lamb will be found some fine passages descriptive of him. With some faults for which he was perhaps hardly responsible, Lloyd was a good fellow, with a mind remarkably sensitive and vibrant; one who could both see and feel, but who had not the absolute artist's gift of saying.

Review of Barron Field's "First Fruits of Australian Poetry"

(*Examiner*, 16 and 17 January, 1820)

Barron Field was that friend who accompanied Charles and Bridget Elia in their famous visit to Mackery End in Hertfordshire (see vol. i., p. 148). This must of course have been before he went to New South Wales in 1817, for he did not return till 1824. To him was written the letter which afterwards appeared as an Essay of Elia, namely, "Distant Correspondents" (see vol. i.). Perhaps the most interesting thing about his connection with Lamb (apart from the fact that Lamb wrote to him and about him) is this: that he claimed descent from Oliver Cromwell, and therefore used a seal in which were quartered, in Lamb's phrase, "the imperial arms of England"; and that Lamb, having occasion once to write to Sir Walter Scott, and deeming that he ought not to approach the great man save in a sort of panoply of historical grandeur, did borrow this seal of Barron Field and did therewith seal and sign his letter!—a happy thought which C. L. never grew tired of chuckling over. It is unnecessary to say that Lamb had a deep respect for Sir Walter Scott, and that Sir Walter Scott was a Scotsman.

"We know a merry Captain and co-navigator with Cook." This was Captain (afterwards Admiral) Burney, always a favourite with Lamb, "especially" at the whist-table.

Review of Keats' "Lamia"

(*New Times*, 19 July, 1820)

This is the article spoken of by the Cowden Clarkes in their *Recollections of Writers*, and it is mentioned by Mr. Fitzgerald as one of the papers by Lamb not yet recovered. The difficulty of recovering it has been due to the fact that copies of the *New Times* are very scarce. The British Museum Catalogue knows nothing of that newspaper, though there is a set of volumes in a separate uncatalogued collection belonging to the Museum.

The chief interest of the article is, that it is by "Lamb" about "Keats," and no doubt that is interest enough. But Lamb was never within sight of his best in writing reviews, and here one feels him to be even more hampered than usual, in spite of some fine remarks and some memorable phrases. One's impression, conviction rather, that there was a very "imperfect sympathy" between Lamb and Keats, is rather confirmed than removed, but the article is the more valuable on that account as a sidelight on Lamb's character. For one sees that he has taken pen in hand not so much because spontaneous and whole-hearted admiration for the young poet has impelled him, as because his nature was in instant opposition to the literary ruffianism—the bludgeonings and insults of bad old "Blackwood"—which made Keats its object in those days. Still, the opposition is somewhat gentle; it regrets and deprecates rather than denounces, the excesses of the Edinburgh gang. This was not the way of Lamb's greatest editor, John Scott of the *Champion* and the *London Magazine*; who, being himself an Aberdonian, yet took up the cause of the young "Cockney Poet" with the generous indignation of a knight of old, or, what is better still, a Highland gentleman. He paid for this generous indignation with his life some six months after this was written, falling in a duel with Christie, who was to have been Lockhart's second, but became a principal in the course of the quarrel.

I ought to explain that, in this and most other cases, I have left Lamb's quotations, right or wrong, as he wrote them.

Review of Barry Cornwall's "Marcian Colonna"

(*New Times*, 22 July, 1820)

This, like the article on Kean's "Hamlet," is admitted only on internal evidence, and that not of the most convincing. It is the review next

following that on Keats, and perhaps some of the hesitations, the restraints in the praise, are due not a little to the comparison which Lamb, in spite of his friendship and fondness for Barry Cornwall, could not but make between "his" extremely excellent literary matter and the absolute literature of Keats, whom he had just been reading: between a high degree of charm and accomplishment in the one and, in the other, the original and originative power of genius. But just this restraint, this absence of flattery of the work of a young poet whom he respected and liked so much—who was, indeed, almost a pupil and a *protégé* of his—inclines me to think that the article is by Lamb. He has elsewhere (see "Fragments of Criticism," No. 19) coupled the names of Moore and Byron as he does here; and the estimate of Byron is that which he expressed in a letter to Joseph Cottle in 1819. "It is quite a mistake that I could dislike anything you should write against Lord Byron, for I have a thorough aversion to his character and a very moderate admiration of his genius; he is great in so little a way. To be a poet is to be the man—not a petty portion of occasional low passion worked up into a permanent form of humanity." Nevertheless, the similarity of view which we find in this criticism might be accounted for by acquaintance; such acquaintance with Lamb's way of thinking as Talfourd had. And the style is in places extremely like Talfourd's; it has what I have called the facile expansiveness of Talfourd's style, its readiness to go off into large spatial metaphor.

Specimens from the Writings of Sir Thomas More

(*Indicator*, 20 December, 1820)

At the end of this year Leigh Hunt was in bad health, and so was unable to do his editorial duty by the *Indicator*, at least to the extent of contributing new articles. He made shift with some old matter of his own from the *Examiner*; which act being condoned by his subscribers, and indeed well received, he gave on 13 December some "Table-Talk" which Lamb had contributed to the same newspaper. Always eager to help in an hour of need, Lamb now sent him the present article, mainly excerpts from a Commonplace-Book. To annotate it would be to annotate More and not Lamb, which is more than I undertake to do.

Ritson *versus* John Scott the Quaker

(*London Magazine*, April 1823)

This was one of Lamb's hoaxes, though not so much a hoax as some people once supposed. For there really was a John Scott the Quaker (of Amwell), and he did produce a book of *Critical Essays on Certain English Poets* containing the comments which Lamb quotes. But the "Ritson" who hunts the harmless Quaker through all these paragraphs was Lamb himself; who tells how, on a certain paper of his not being well received by the proprietors of the magazine, "I took up Scott, where I had scribbled some petulant remarks, and for a makeshift father'd them on Ritson." The interest of the remarks is neither in their wit nor their wisdom, so much as in the fact that Charles Lamb, who was so witty and so wise, had a kind of pleasure in making them: and not so much a kind of pleasure as a kind of profit.

Letter of Elia to Robert Southey, Esq.

(*London Magazine*, October 1823)

Not to call this a storm in a tea-cup, we may say that out of a dubious passing phrase of Southey's—a little cloudiness, at one point, in the well-meant expression of friendship and good feeling—Lamb was ill-advised enough, by himself or others, to fabricate a cause of quarrel with an old friend, which he foisted upon his own mind against his own better judgment. The mistake was the issue of a stagnant moment, of one of those periods when the re-creative life-blood of his genius and his humour was not in full circulation. He seems to have done the deed when Mary was "from home." For he says that it was done without her knowledge, and much to her grief when she heard of it: adding—"My guardian angel was absent at that time." And yet, for all his self-reproach about it, there are few things of his that we would not more willingly spare.

The brief history of the affair is this. In the Essay on "Witches and Other Night Fears" Lamb had said, "It is not book, or picture, or the stories of foolish servants, which create these terrors in children. They can at most but give them a direction." He then went on to instance "Dear little T. H., who of all children has been brought up with the most scrupulous exclusion of every taint of superstition"—but who, it seemed, had as wild a time of it o' nights as any christened child could wish, and "would start at shapes, unborrowed of tradition, in sweats to which the reveries of the cell-damned murderer are tranquillity" (vol. i. of this edition, p. 79). Now this "Dear little T. H." was "Thornton Hunt, my favourite child," the son of Leigh Hunt, and therefore the son of a father who was no favourite with the *Quarterly* or the readers of the *Quarterly*. Even to a good fellow like Southey, who ought to have known better, Leigh Hunt the man and the consummate littérateur was quite lost sight of behind the big label of "Republican" and "Infidel" with which those who took an easier way in life, if not a more reasonable way of thinking, be-plastered him. In fine, he was a man to be attacked whenever opportunity offered, and Southey, it would seem, was not above lending a hand. So in an article concerning the Spread of Infidelity (*Quarterly Review*, January 1823) a blow for the good cause was struck in a passage beginning thus: "Unbelievers have not always been honest enough . . . to express their real feelings; but this we know concerning them, that when they have renounced their birthright of hope, they have not been able to divest themselves of fear." As a token of this fact—a fact cited by Southey very much as if he were vindicating the greatness of the Almighty against dangerous comparisons and proving that, whatever people might think to the contrary, He was very resourceful and always had the best of it in a rivalry with the likes of Leigh Hunt—reference was made to the passage (in Lamb's Essay quoted above) concerning the Night Terrors of poor little Thornton Hunt. Southey was an extremely learned man, and had medical books enough in his library to have restrained him—had he sought knowledge there, or used the knowledge he had drawn from them already—from committing this act of fatuity. But he did it, and probably did not know what he was doing. To get at Leigh Hunt through his child, he had to travel via the pages of Elia, for it was there that he had gathered his information about the little boy's *Pavor Nocturnus*; and no doubt he thought he was doing Lamb a good turn in passing by citing him in the following manner: "There is a remarkable proof of this in *Elia's Essays*, a book which wants only a sounder religious feeling to be as delightful as it is original." Southey, to do him justice, had no thought of hurting Lamb or of spoiling his book for the market by attaching to it, inferentially at least, the stigma of religious unsoundness. But Lamb took it so, and rather more than so: for he exclaims in his letter to Bernard Barton in July, "Southey has attacked Elia on the score of infidelity in the *Quarterly*. . . . He might have spared an old friend such a construction of a few careless flights. . . . But I love and respect Southey, and will not retort . . . The hint he has dropped will knock the sale of the book on the head, which was almost at a stop before." The good resolution, not to retort, was dissolved away, however: perhaps the absence of his guardian angel had something to do with it, and some stimulation from his publisher a little more; but most of all the fact, when he had time to think of it, that he seemed to be a kind of permanent mark for the malice of the *Quarterly*. He had once in its pages been referred to as "a poor maniac"—on which occasion, to tell the truth of everybody, Southey had been most instant in calling Gifford's attention to the disgrace, and in securing from Gifford a very ample expression of his regrets, which were very sincere. Later, when Lamb had forgiven this wrong and even wrote an article for the *Quarterly*, the article was sub-edited by Gifford in a way which must have seemed to the poor author to be equally an outcome of old malice and ever-green stupidity. Next, it was in the pages of the *Quarterly* that somebody had referred to his "Confessions of a Drunkard," and declared that the story which that paper told was known to be a true tale of its author's life—as some other fool has also said more recently in a morning paper, and has sneered at me for not saying the same silly thing. Finally, here was Southey, an old friend, with his damning allusion to a "want of sound religious feeling." Brooding upon all of which wrongs, until it became (his guardian angel being absent at the time) quite clear that he "must" do something in the matter, he ended by writing this article.

And although it was a mistake (for Southey certainly meant no harm

to "him," and the whole plea is rather forced in regard to that point), we must yet be very glad that he did it. For the mistake afforded, in the sequel, a very pleasant instance of the old truth that the falling-out of faithful friends renewing is of love; and we may say that neither Southey nor Lamb would have known each the other nearly so well had both of them been quite wise, and had one of them not "tried" to be out of temper for this once. This, after all, is the point of chief interest and value in the Essay, for a studious and unimpassioned later generation of readers. In it we see Charles Lamb in an equivocal and not very favourable position: he is in the thick of a quarrel with a friend, and is fairly bound and indentured, for the time being, to the hideous business of being hateful; if he can only manage it. But he can't manage it—not a bit! From the beginning we see that he is trying hard to persuade himself that he has a substantial injury to complain of, and feels aggrieved; but how speedily he gets away from that difficult contention, and how fain he is to convert the whole subject into a vapour of reminiscences, all iridescent with the colours of friendship: friendship with Southey among the rest. And as we get towards the end, do we not read, in every line, that he is in mortal terror—this savage and angry Elia—lest he should hurt the enemy in the least, or be supposed ("in spite of appearances") to be at all angry with him? Do we not see that he is frightened for the issue of this prank ("if only Southey should misunderstand him!") and wants nothing in the world so much as to have Southey by the hand once more? And that was indeed the end of the matter. For Southey—the most astonished man in England when he read this article—wrote Lamb a very noble letter, and the heart of Lamb fairly ran out of doors to meet it. But the story of this belongs to vol. xii. All that I need do here is to jot down one or two explanations; namely, to write in full the names which Lamb gives only in initials.

"An exile in Genoa" (p. 323). Leigh Hunt and his family were at this time in Italy. "The paper on Saying Grace"—(see vol. i., p. 107) "You have all your life been making a jest of the Devil" (p. 324). Southey was, among the others of his set, incomparably "the" humorist and the man of many rich qualities, in early days; and Pig and the Devil—not Roast Pig, however, but Live Pig, which the Devil entered into—were favourite topics, upon which he jested with exceeding merit and savour. "N., mine and my father's friend," was Randal Norris: see vol. i., p. 347. "T. N. T.," Thomas Noon Talfourd. "W., the light and warm-hearted," was Thomas Griffiths Wainewright, who wrote under the pseudonym of "Janus Weathercock." Lamb put his money—his "golden opinions" —on the wrong horse this time; for the light and warm-hearted W. was a particularly cold-blooded scoundrel, whose subsequent fame as a forger and poisoner has quite eclipsed the earlier lustre which was his as the dandified littérateur and hyper-æsthetic fop of the *London Magazine*. He was a wretch of parts, however, and wrote as understanding and genial an article on Lamb as anybody has written since: and he was almost the first. See *Sidelights on Charles Lamb* by Mr. Bertram Dobell, an informing and charming book which it is a pleasure to praise. "The translator of Dante": Henry Cary, who was a clergyman, so excellent withal that Lamb, that there might be no momentary suspicion of doubt attaching to him, preferred to call him "the Dante-man." "Allan C., the large-hearted Scot," was Allan Cunningham: a great favourite, in all senses, certain alleged imperfect sympathies notwithstanding. "A——p," Thomas Allsop, a stockbroker, a man of serious and benevolent mind, a good friend to Coleridge, and the writer of what is one of the source-books in regard to both Coleridge and Lamb. "G——n" was Gillman, the Highgate surgeon, truly Coleridge's "more than friend." He had Coleridge as his guest and patient during the last sixteen years of the Sage's life, and made all the arrangements of his household have reference to him. Wherefore Lamb said, when that wonderful guest had gone away, "I love the faithful Gilmans more than while they exercised their virtues towards him living. What was his mansion is consecrated to me a chapel." "W——th" is of course Wordsworth; "M." is Thomas Manning, that great name in the *Letters*; "H. C. R.," Henry Crabb Robinson, the man of many acquaintances, and the most invaluable English diarist of his century, thus far revealed. "The gall-less and single-minded Dyer" is well known to the reader. "The veteran Colonel" is Colonel Phillips, to whom there are references in the *Letters*. "W. A.," William Ayrton, Lamb's musical friend and correspondent, whom we shall meet again. "The authors of *Rimini* and of the Table-Talk" are of course Leigh Hunt

and Hazlitt. "The late Thomas Holcroft," a friend of Godwin's, and noted as a Freethinker in those days, was playwright, picture-fancier, and miscellaneous author. A man of a peculiarly hard, but clear and honest mind, he had had perhaps the hardest upbringing that ever fell to the lot of a boy who grew to be a man and a writer in his day. "Accident introduced me to the acquaintance of Mr. L. H." We do not know what the accident was; but they must have been pretty well acquainted in 1811–12, else there would have been fewer articles from one hand (be their merit what it might) in the four Numbers of the *Reflector*. Both Charles and Mary made a full return for these old partialities when the time came; for when Leigh Hunt was in prison, who so constant as they in visiting him? See, for an oft-quoted passage, any edition of the *Autobiography*. "Sundry harsh things . . . against our friend C." Leigh Hunt confesses in general terms that he neither knew Coleridge very well nor took to him, personally, very much. "W. H." (p. 331) is William Hazlitt; who wasn't friends with Lamb at this moment, but could not, of course, stand out against a passage like this, and so came once more into the fold, never after to stray. At his death in 1830, Lamb was with him to the last. "Mr. Belsham," a very considerable Unitarian divine, not yet forgotten; but Lamb has what he would call a more "petulant" reference to him in another place.

"You had your education at Westminster." The part of the Essay from here to the end was alone republished by Lamb, under the title of "The Tombs in the Abbey" (vol. i., p. 242); but it was introduced by a short passage embodying the phrase in the preceding paragraph about his having been "turned out like a dog, or some profane person, into the common street." As for "that amiable spy, Major André," he was an accomplished British officer of French descent who came to a bad end. While engaged in completing certain ticklish arrangements for the betrayal of West Point into the hands of the British, he was unlucky enough to fall into the hands of the Colonials; who considered themselves justified—the more so as he had plans of West Point and such-like dangerous documents secreted in his socks—in hanging him as a spy. This was in October 1780. He had an almost mythic fame in consequence, which lasted far into the next century, and a monument to his memory was, by the King's orders, erected in the Abbey; whither also his remains were brought and laid to rest in 1821.

Readers Against the Grain and Mortifications of an Author

(*New Times*, 13 and 31 January, 1825)

These, which are the second and third in the series called the "Lepus Papers," may be considered together. The series was fitfully contributed and consisted in all of six short papers, appearing between 8 January and 25 August. It takes its name from the signature "Lepus" affixed to each of the papers, this signature having been chosen with special reference to the subject of the first paper alone, entitled "Many Friends." "A hare," says Lamb in "Popular Fallacies" (vol. i., p. 300), "makes many friends;" and the writer here complains that he has made more friends than he can manage with comfort. This paper on "Many Friends" is in fact very much a transcription of a familiar letter to Wordsworth written in 1818. What I take to be the most significant thing about the "Lepus Papers" is that his writing them—as it were, aside, and in a secret place—was a small thing which expressed "that need for escape, for change, for the stimulation of new connections and a new pseudonym," caused by the deadness and distress which he was feeling so often in those days before the Great Liberation from the Desk; and continued to feel after it. Very significant it is, also, that the subject of these papers is in nearly every case something that irked him, something that bored or annoyed or displeased him in the ways or characters of people by whom he was surrounded. He had always to get even with those things in the interest of his sanity; and so the "Lepus Papers" are only a particular outlet, a psychological safety valve, like some other things that he wrote, and a good many harmless but strange-looking things that he did.

As to "Readers Against the Grain": it is interesting to compare (or contrast) what he says here about his office companions in 1825 with what he had to say in 1796–7. The phrase "the good old reading of Addison or Fielding's days" lends some confirmation to what I have

said as to the probable contents of the famed "spacious closet of good old English reading" (vol. i., p. 335). Finally, that Lamb had much to do with the reading and the reading-matter of his fellow clerks in the India House, we know by other tokens than the significant words, "I have something to do in these book-clubs, and know the trick and mystery of it."

As to "Mortifications of an Author": it is more an exercise in fun, if the phrase may be allowed, than any of the other "Lepus Papers": he puts himself in the position of the unesteemed author, which he never really occupied. Still, there may have been "intelligent reading men" in the India House who thought there were more important writers on the *London Magazine* than the unassuming little man in their midst. "A——n C——m" is, of course, Allan Cunningham, whom Lamb seems to have taken a particular delight in. The Lady who prided herself on "not reading any of her husband's publications" was, I fancy, the second Mrs. Godwin.

Review of Dibdin's "Comic Tales"

(*New Times*, 27 January, 1825)

Lamb made the acquaintance of John Bates Dibdin (son of Charles Dibdin the younger) in 1823, and threw a great deal of gusto into what was really a new and stimulating friendship. J. B. Dibdin sent him a copy of his father's *Chessiad*, which Lamb acknowledges in a letter (11 January, 1825) that contains the essence of this little criticism. "We confess that we are more at home in Hoyle than Phillidor": compare "Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist" for a laudation of the great art of the one Old Master, and a disparagement of that of the other.

Review of "Odes and Addresses to Great People"

(*New Times*, 12 April, 1825)

Interesting amongst Lamb's reviews as containing the expression of an important principle: namely, the doctrine of the true church in regard to puns, and their essentially "independent" or "free-will" character. So much, however, might have been deduced from the passage in which he argues (vol. i., p. 307) that a pun "may easily be too curious and artificial," may be, as another poet says (of something else), "too precise in every part," and that "if it limp a little, or prove defective in one leg—all the better." Such limping, such loose-endedness, there may not be where the thing is so nicely contrived as "a double debt to pay," where the pun is so adjusted that it shall be both a pun and a "common" joke at the same time. The liberty is gone out of the subject at once—"So the infinite runs away!" As to the book and its authors, we shall meet it and them again.

Estimate of De Foe's Secondary Novels

(Wilson's *Memoirs of De Foe*, 1830)

"De Foe was always my darling," says Lamb in a letter to Walter Wilson (15 November, 1829); and so much would almost follow necessarily from the constitution of mind which made him so enthusiastic an admirer of that other great realistic writer, William Hogarth—to say nothing of Fielding and other examples of "good old English reading" galore. Walter Wilson had been a schoolfellow of Lamb's, and his interest in Defoe seems to have been a pretty constant one; for the most important of Lamb's letters to him—of some seven years' earlier date—are disquisitions on this "darling" topic. The present paper was written as a contribution to Wilson's *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel De Foe*, 1830, in the third volume of which work it appeared. In another part of the work Wilson printed a considerable passage upon the same subject from a letter of Lamb's written to him in 1822; and Lamb himself was astonished when, on a presentation copy of the book reaching him, he perceived how closely the two papers agreed in thought and phrase. "Odd that, never keeping a scrap of my own letters, with some fifteen years' interval I should nearly

have said the same things." This is very well worth noting, though Lamb ought to have said six or seven years, and not fifteen. In regard to his general characterisation of Defoe, which is so excellent that the best subsequent critics have been able to add nothing to it but water, it may be worth remarking that during the present year (1903) a series of papers has appeared in the *Athenæum* which embody a very strong argument, on grounds external and internal, in favour of the view that of many of these secondary works Defoe was not the author, but only the editor or reviser of the manuscript; and that they had their sustained realism and their autobiographical flavour and coherence from the simple fact that they did chronicle real events, and were indeed autobiographies.

The concluding words of this paper from "fastidiousness" to the end ought to have been within quotation marks; the author quoted from (not quite correctly, of course) being Lamb himself. (See this vol., p. 258.)

Clarence Songs

(*Spectator*, 4 July, 1830)

Probably only his liking for an unlikely argument made Lamb suggest that *Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill* immortalised an amour, or at least an aspiration, of the Sailor Prince. Why Williams should be uniformly sweet, and the name the favourite name of favourite lovers in balladry old and new—they are usually very gentle—it is not for the present editor to inquire; but he has often meditated on the subject with a feeling of happiness. The high favour in which the name was held certainly dates from times before there was any Royal Midshipman to send it aloft.

The disappearance of the Clarence Songs, "with which the town swarmed" at one time, is easily accounted for. They had no real truth in them, and could not last. Prince William was a very poor creature, both as man and midshipman, and not worth a song.

The Latin Poems of Vincent Bourne

(*Englishman's Magazine*, September 1831)

Of Vincent Bourne something has been said in vol. i., p. 339. A complete translation of his poems is a desideratum in our literature still. What Lamb desiderated most, however, at the time of composing this article, was an opportunity of putting to rights those critics who had belittled beyond its deservings a little book of his own which made no pretensions to greatness, namely, *Album Verses*, published by his young friend Moxon in 1830. One is glad to see that Lamb was responsible for the title of the book, as the title of the book was mainly responsible for the prepossessions with which the critics took it in hand. In a word, he gave those good men the wrong cue, and they followed it. The article is known to be his by its whole contents, and also by a small but sufficient piece of external evidence: a letter to Moxon, in which he says he has contrived to review himself, and asks whether the thing which he is sending (this article, to wit) will do?

I ought to say that I have corrected the Latin Poems quoted here by the text of Mitford's Edition of Vincent Bourne; partly because it is said to be the best edition, but mainly because it is more easily handled than the folio which I do not possess.

Review of Edward Moxon's "Sonnets"

(*Athenæum*, 13 April, 1833)

I do not doubt but that this article (first drawn attention to by Mr. J. A. Rutter) is by Lamb. It is in his most simply dignified style, as beseemed a contribution to those classic columns; which imposed a restraint that it was good for him, especially in those later days, to work under. Working so, he did himself most justice: for "his serious talk, like his serious writing, was still his best." He needed such outside help a little, in those last heavy years, to remind him of his own true manner. There is in this tiny article a fine respect, and something very like a benediction placed by an old man upon the head of a young one. Edward Moxon

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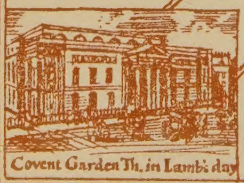
Christ's Hospital. The Writing School

A Map showing places in LONDON associated with Charles Lamb

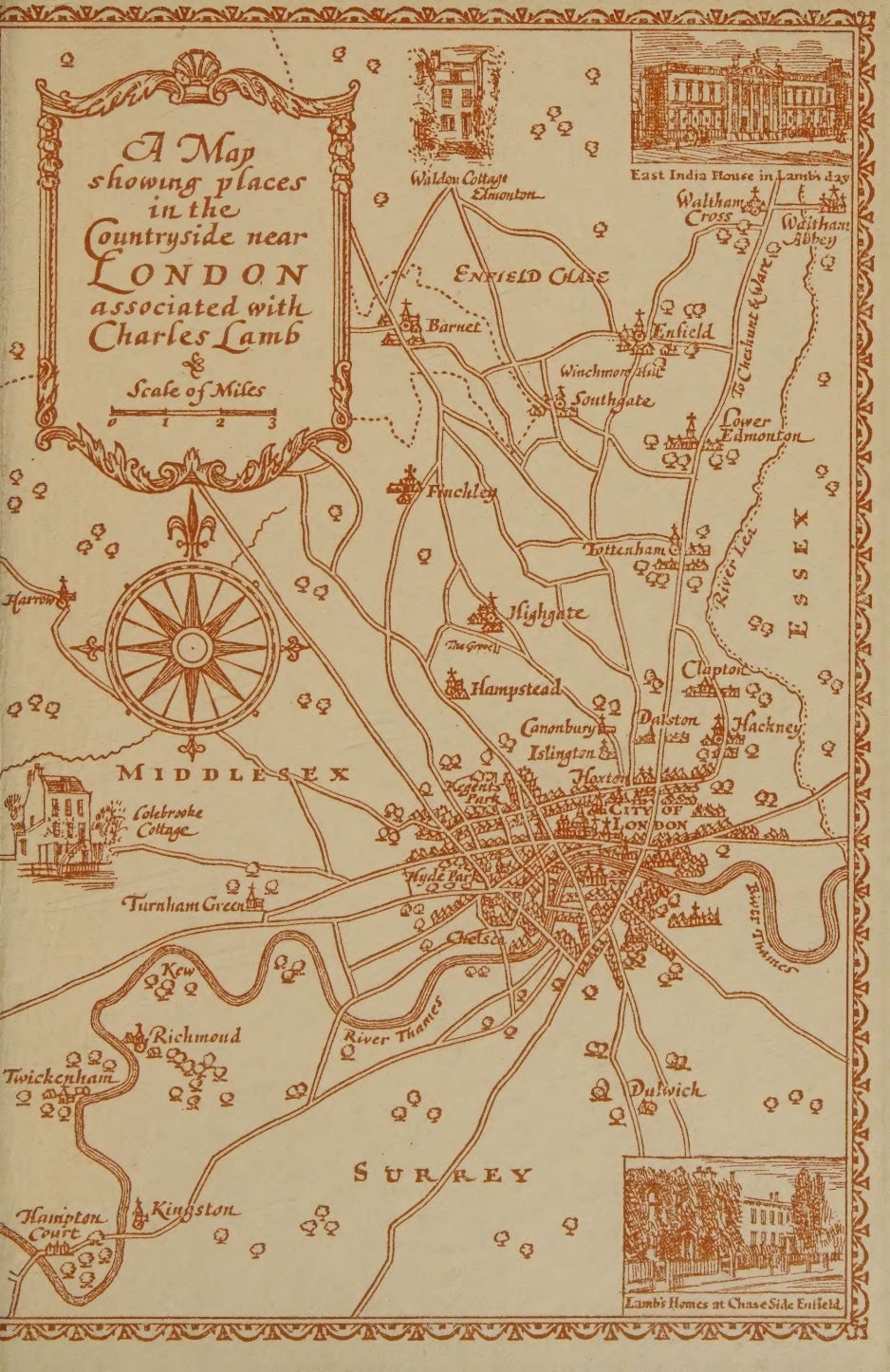


Covent Garden Th. in Lamb's day

A. E. TAYLOR. 29

* Within the Temple
Inner Temple Lane
Mitre Court Bldgs.
Crown Office Row

Highbury
Highbury Fields
Canonbury
Canonbury Tower
Islington
Chapel St.
Pentonville Rd.
Hoxton
City Road
Sadler's Wells Th.
Clerkenwell
Old Street
Shoreditch
Shoreditch Church
Bloomsbury
British Museum
Paddington
Holborn
Oxford St.
Seven Dials
T. Queen St.
Covent Gn. Th.
Drury Lane Th.
St. Andrew's Ch.
St. Dunstan's Ch.
CITY
Christ's Hospital
Salutation Tav.
South Sea House
East India House
London Tavern
St. Paul's
Mansion House
The * Temple
Thames St.
Broad St. Hill
Somerset House
Strand
RIVER THAMES
Bankside
Southwark
Borough High St.
Bermondsey
Mayfair
Hyde Park
Piccadilly
Pall Mall
Haymarket Th.
St. James's Park
Westminster
Lambeth
Chelsea
RIVER THAMES
Clapham Road
Regent's Park
Marylebone Road
Euston Rd.
Gray's Inn Rd.
Caledonian Rd.
To Highgate
To Hampstead
Essex Road
Kingsland Turnpike
Dalston


A Map showing places in the Countryside near LONDON associated with Charles Lamb
Scale of Miles
0 1 2 3
Walden Cottage Edmonton
East India House in Lamb's day
Waltham Cross
Waltham Abbey
ENFIELD CHASE
Barnet
Enfield
To Cheshunt & Ware
Winchmore Hill
Southgate
Lower Edmonton
Finchley
Tottenham
River Lea
ESSEX
Harrow
Highgate
The Grove
Hampstead
Clapton
Canonbury
Dalston
Hackney
Islington
Hoxton
MIDDLESEX
Regent's Park
CITY OF LONDON
Colebrooke Cottage
Hyde Park
Turnham Green
Chelsea
Kew
Richmond
River Thames
Twickenham
Dulwich
SURREY
Hampton Court
Kingston
Lamb's Homes at Chase Side Enfield